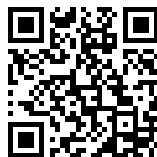
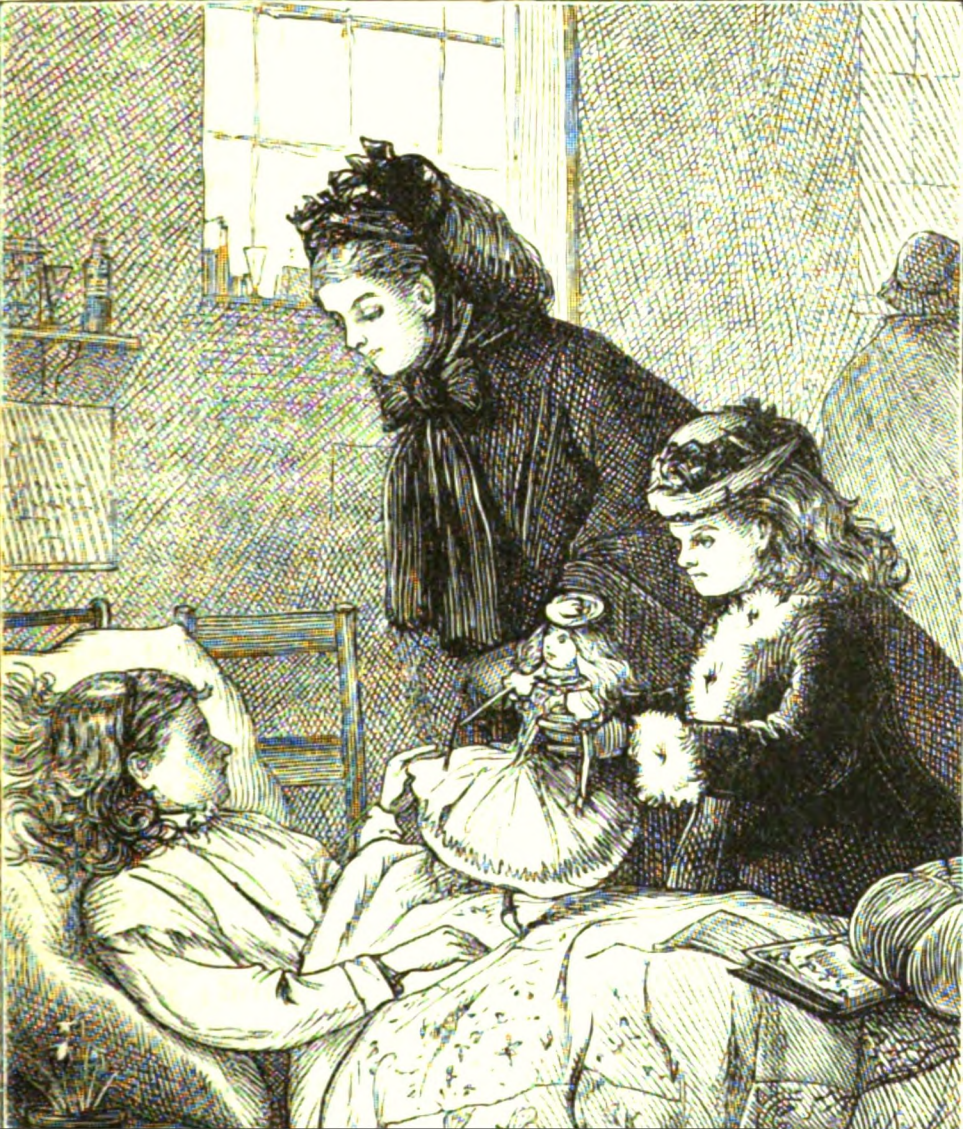

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Aunt Judy's annual volume

Mrs. Alfred Gatty, Horatia K.
F. Gatty Eden, Juliana Horatia Gatty Ewing

AUNT JUDY'S
CHRISTMAS VOLUME.

AUNT JUDY'S CHRISTMAS VOLUME

FOR 1872.

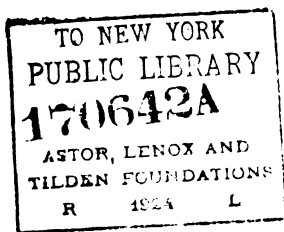
EDITED BY MRS. ALFRED GATTY,

AUTHOR OF "PARABLES FROM NATURE,"
"AUNT JUDY'S TALIS,"
ETC., ETC.



WITH ILLUSTRATIONS BY:
H. PATERSON, F. GILBERT, A. W. BAYES,
A. W. COOPER,
ETC. ETC.

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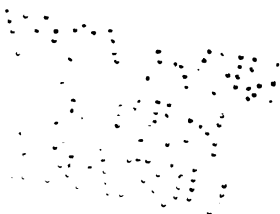


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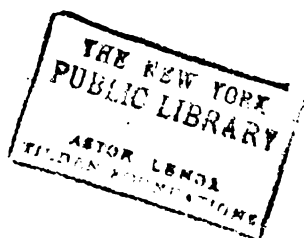
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HEREWARD DAYRELL

HEREWARD DAYRELL; OR, THE COMMANDER- IN-CHIEF.

CHAPTER I.

SOLDIERS.

 YES right! Geraint, you *do* look about you so much! why don't you stand still and look straight at me? I have told you ever so many times. Soldiers must not look about them. Now, quick march! to the left wheel! halt! right about face! quick march! halt!" So spoke, or rather shouted, little Hereward Dayrell to his three brothers, Alan, Manly, and Geraint, whom he was, as he said, reviewing on the quay of Lambton Harbour, Wellington, New Zealand. Hereward was nine years old, a great sturdy boy, with very rosy cheeks, bright blue eyes, and curly golden-brown hair. He spoke in a commanding tone, and always took the lead in the games with his brothers. Alan was barely a year older, and neither so strong nor so tall; he did not care so much for active games, and would often quite as soon have stayed at home with a book; but he was very good-natured, and, when Hereward wanted him to come out to play, he did not like to be churlish and to refuse; besides, he was a little bit afraid of being laughed at, and called a girl, if he stayed at home. Manly was eight; he was short and fat, and a great admirer of Hereward, who could persuade him to do whatever he pleased, and who frequently led him into great mischief; and now little six-year-old Geraint was beginning to join in all his brothers' amusements. Oh, how Hereward repented that he had allowed Geraint to enlist in his corps! he was a perpetual element of confusion; in no way was his demeanour befitting a soldier, and reproof was thrown away on him; he cared for nothing, he hardly understood when Hereward scolded him, and only laughed his bright laugh, and played on as happily as before. Hereward was thoroughly in earnest; drilling was

no game to him, but the most serious business of life, and Geraint's trifling sorely tried his temper: sometimes Alan was obliged to interfere between them, for Hereward was apt to forget how much stronger he was than his little brother, and to be too rough with him; but in general the games went on smoothly, for the little Dayrells were not quarrelsome children, and, as neither Alan nor Manly ever attempted to dispute the post of commander-in-chief with Hereward, but were content to obey his orders, there was very seldom any disaffection in the little corps. "Present arms!" shouted Hereward.

"Shoot! fire! bang!" exclaimed Geraint.

Hereward was furious. "Geraint," he cried, "you must wait for the others; when will you learn that you must not shoot until I say, Fire? Now—attention! present arms! fire!"

"Boat ahoy!" shouted Manly, making a speaking-trumpet of his hands, and in a moment the guns were flung away, the regiment—disregarding the orders to "disband regularly," which the "commander-in-chief" shouted at the top of his voice—dispersed, and the three boys rushed down the quay to see the steamer come in. Hereward stamped his foot with anger at the unruly conduct of his troop; but, perceiving that they were gone beyond recall, he hastened to follow them, and was soon very busy helping (?) the sailors with their ropes; while Alan and Manly endeavoured to share a double spy-glass by each looking with one eye. Little Geraint, finding that he was neglected by his brothers, amused himself collecting stones and bits of wood, which were lying about the quay, and building a harbour with them; and so engrossed was he with his work that he did not perceive, for some time, that his brothers had gone some considerable way round the harbour towards the landing-place for the boats, and that he was alone.

The little Dayrells had one sister, Enid, a little older than themselves, who, after the fashion of elder sisters, allowed herself to be made a complete slave; indeed, "Slavey" had been her pet name since the day when she said to Geraint, half-playfully, half-reproachfully, as he ordered her about, "You might as well call me 'Slavey' at once." To wait on her brothers was Enid's delight; and nothing pleased her much better than when Manly asked her to hem the sails for his boat, or when Hereward announced that he wanted a new flag. But Alan was Enid's chief friend, and, being of a quiet, studious

nature, he often preferred reading with her to sharing in Hereward's and Manly's more boisterous sports. When they went out to play on the quay, Enid was her mother's companion, and was delighted to help her in household matters, or in work for the boys, which was seldom scarce.

Colonel Dayrell's house was situated at some little distance from the harbour, and near the foot of the mountain chain which surrounds the town of Wellington. These mountains were a source of great curiosity and ambition to the boys, who, having heard many stories of their danger and inaccessibility, were constantly planning schemes for ascending them, and frightening Enid with romancings about what they would do when they were *men*, and might go where they pleased. Even as boys they enjoyed a great deal of liberty, and often alarmed their mother by neglecting to return home in reasonable time. On this special evening she was very uneasy, having, rather against her will, allowed Geraint to accompany the others to play on the quay; so that when her husband, Colonel Dayrell, came in, she begged him to go down to the harbour to look for them, and, at any rate, to bring home Geraint.

To Enid's great delight, her father claimed her for a companion; a walk with him was always a special treat to her; she did not care that he hardly spoke to her, and scarcely seemed to know that any one was with him, for she was used to his silent ways, and only felt that he held her hand safely in his.

As they neared the harbour they were somewhat surprised to see no sign of the boys, and felt a little anxious until they spied Geraint busily working at his harbour. He could not tell what had become of his brothers; and Colonel Dayrell was much vexed with them for having left the child alone. He took him home at once, and was obliged to go out again immediately on business, for which Enid was secretly rather glad, as he was not likely to see the boys till the next morning, when his anger would have had time to cool. It was chiefly on Alan's account that Enid rejoiced, for though it was generally Hereward who was in fault in leading the others into mischief, Colonel Dayrell was hardly enough with his boys to be aware of this, and Alan, being the eldest, was considered responsible, and was often blamed when really he had done his utmost to dissuade Hereward from some wild scheme. Alan was too generous to accuse his brother

while Hereward was too thoughtless to see how much his father's displeasure distressed Alan; so, though he sometimes said it was all *his* fault, the chief blame was still laid upon Alan.

CHAPTER II.

HEROES.

WHEN the boys returned to the place in which they had left Geraint, they were a little disturbed not to find him again; and, as no answer came to their repeated shouts of his name, Alan insisted on returning home to see if he were there. This made Hereward very angry, as *he* wished to stay longer on the pier; but Manly, being anxious lest they should be late for tea, and so incur the penalty of going without sugar, for once took Alan's part, and Hereward did not care to stay alone. They walked for some moments in silence, till Alan, anxious to turn his brother's thoughts from his supposed grievance, exclaimed suddenly, "Does not the mountain look beautiful over there?" Manly assented. "It looks so near, too," continued Alan, "as if one could walk up it easily."

"I mean to go up it some day," said Hereward, falling quickly into his brother's trap.

"But it is too far off, really, is it not?" asked Manly.

"It is too far off for us to go up it in one day, of course," said Hereward, "but what I mean to do is this; we will start off some morning quite early, and walk as far as we can in the day, and at night we will sleep under the trees somewhere, and go on again the next morning, and keep on like that till we get quite to the top of the mountain, and then, when we go home and tell them where we have been, they will be so much surprised, and will think us quite heroes."

"But, Hereward," objected Manly, "should we not want something to eat?"

"Of course we should," said Hereward, "but we will take our food with us; we could take enough for a week easily, if we did not eat much, and we shall not be gone longer than that."

"But how shall we get it?" urged Manly.

"Why we must save up our money till we have enough to buy our food; we can't go till then."

"I don't think mamma will let us go at all," said Alan.

"I don't mean to ask leave; I just mean to go," said Hereward.

"Oh, Hereward!" said Alan, "we cannot do that; just think how anxious mamma would be if we were all away for a whole week, and she did not know where we were gone; you cannot mean us to do that."

"It would be very silly of her to be anxious then," said Hereward.

"But we must tell her where we are going, and ask her leave," persisted Alan.

"Indeed, I shan't," said Hereward; "do you think all the great heroes asked their mothers' leave before they did dangerous things? Why they would never have done them at all if they had waited for leave."

"But we are not heroes; we are only boys," objected Manly.

"Boys can be heroes, though, and I mean to be one," said Hereward; "but it is no use asking mamma about it, because she would be sure not to allow it: women always think that things are dangerous; it is so absurd. I just mean to take my own way, and, you mind this, Manly—if you say one word about it, I shall go off by myself some day without telling you; so now, you promise not to tell."

"Oh, no! don't leave me at home, Hereward; I promise you I will not say a single word."

"I shall not go without mamma's leave," said Alan.

"Now, Alan, that is very unkind of you," said Hereward; "you are just going to spoil everything. You know mamma will forbid us to do it, and then we cannot go at all."

"But, Hereward, it is quite as wrong to go, if we think mamma will not like it, as if she had really forbidden it. I can't go unless she knows all about it, and gives us leave."

"Then it is very tiresome and cross of you, Alan, and I will never tell you any of my plans again."

"Don't be angry with me, please, Hereward," pleaded his brother, "indeed I do not mean to be cross; but I can't think it would be right to go without telling mamma."

"Oh, yes, it is all very well to say you don't mean to be cross," said Hereward, angrily, "and all the time you are just going to spoil everything; I shall not go home, or walk with you at all." Hereward turned away, and began walking down the road in the opposite direction, followed by Manly. He was thoroughly out of temper with

Alan, and gave vent to his ill-feelings by picking up stones and throwing them after him; he did not, of course, mean to hit his brother, but some of the stones passed very close to him. Alan turned round to remonstrate, just as Hereward threw a large, sharp, broken stone; and the next moment Hereward, to his great horror, saw him fall to the ground. He ran back to him immediately, in great distress, and tried to raise him. Alan's face was covered with blood, which streamed from a frightful gash just below one eye. He was quite insensible; a crowd soon gathered round the place, and Alan was carried home. When he recovered his senses, his first anxiety was that Hereward, who had told the whole history of the accident, should not be blamed. "It was quite an accident," Alan assured his mother; "Hereward did not mean to hit him; it was *his* own fault for stopping and turning round." Hereward himself was much distressed at having caused his brother so much pain, for he was not a bad boy, only he did not try to control his temper when anything happened to put him out, and he was much too fond of having his own way. For many weeks the doctor was afraid that Alan would lose the sight of the injured eye; and he was kept for a long while in a dark room. Hereward was hardly allowed to go to him, for, though he meant to be kind and considerate, he did not understand how quiet it was necessary to be in a sick room. Mrs. Dayrell hardly left her boy's side, and Enid was his gentle and loving companion; she gladly gave up all her play-time to cheering and amusing him.

CHAPTER III.

AN ESCAPE.

ALAN's accident quite put all idea of the excursion to the mountain out of *his* head, but Hereward did not dismiss the subject for one moment from his mind. He was of a very persistent nature, and when once he made a resolution it was not easy to turn him from its fulfilment. He was much relieved, as time went on, to find that Alan did not allude to the subject; for, had he done so, he was quite sure that his father and mother would forbid them to go, and he was not prepared to commit a direct act of disobedience, though he never once considered, poor boy, that to do what he thought they would disapprove was, in fact, quite as wrong as to disobey a command actually

given. If Alan thought on the matter at all, he fancied that Hereward had given up the idea; but this was not the case; he still continued his preparations, and saved his money carefully, until he had collected what he thought would be a sufficient sum to provide food for the expedition. Manly was in his confidence, but he was too completely under his dominion for Hereward to fear his disclosing the secret, and there was a perfect understanding between the two boys that the subject was not to be even mentioned, for fear of arousing suspicion. It was easier for them to make their preparations while Mrs. Dayrell was so much engaged with Alan, and while Enid was too much engrossed to perceive that anything unusual was in contemplation.

At length the right time arrived. Alan was so much better that Mrs. Dayrell ventured to leave him to the servants' care and Enid's companionship, for a whole day, while she went with her husband to see a friend at some distance. The boys had therefore a whole holiday, and as soon as breakfast was over, Hereward and Manly started, accompanied by Geraint.

This was no part of Hereward's plan—Geraint was far too young for such an expedition, but Manly very foolishly mentioned the subject before him; of course he begged to go too, and Hereward was afraid that if he were left at home he would tell where they were gone, and they would be followed and brought back. "If he gets very tired we must carry him, that is all, Manly," said Hereward.

The absence of the boys from home did not, in the first instance, excite much attention, and even when dinner-time did not bring them no one was really uneasy, for they were rather apt to transgress the rules of punctuality; that they were not in by tea-time was more astonishing, for Manly was not fond of missing his meals, and though Hereward might persuade him to loiter, he could hardly coerce him into enduring so long a fast. In a colonial household, servants are not very plentiful, and Mrs. Dayrell was in the habit of attending to the children herself, so that no one was responsible for the boys; but when the sun set without any tidings of them, Enid became so uneasy that she persuaded the cook to go down to their usual play-place on the quay, to try whether she could hear anything of them. No—none of the men employed there had seen them all day; they were well known in the place; it was evident that they had not been down to the harbour at all. When cook returned with this account, a terrible fore-

boding of evil came into Enid's mind: "Why had she not asked where they were going? she had been so happy alone with Alan, and quite glad they had not come in, and now perhaps some accident had happened to them, and what could she do?" She tried to keep her fears from Alan, for she had been warned not to excite him; but her voice betrayed her, and when he told her what he suspected had become of his brothers, her fears became still greater. She could not bear to leave him and go to bed, but waited in his room for her parents' return.

Colonel and Mrs. Dayrell drove quietly back to Wellington in the cool of the evening, little suspecting the terrible anxiety that awaited their return home. As they entered the house, Enid flung herself into her mother's arms, exclaiming, "Oh, mamma, I am so glad you are come, for Hereward, and Manly, and Geraint have never come home, and Alan says they are gone up to the top of the mountain!"

Colonel Dayrell pushed past the child and entered the boy's room. "Alan, tell me, what does this mean? Do you know where your brothers are gone?" He tried to speak calmly, but he was very pale. Mrs. Dayrell had followed him; she looked quite ill and anxious, and trembled so much that she was obliged to sit down: Enid clung caressingly to her. Alan answered his father eagerly, but his voice shook as he spoke. "Hereward talked one day about going up the mountain, papa, but I thought he had forgotten it."

"Then you did not know he was going to-day, Alan? why did you tell Enid he was gone?"

"I only said I thought he must have gone, papa; I do not know, really."

"When did Hereward talk about going?—yesterday?"

"Oh, no, papa—a long while ago—before——" Alan stopped short.

"Before your cheek was hurt, Alan?"

"Yes, papa, that day;" and the tears rose to Alan's eyes at the remembrance of the little quarrel that had occasioned all the mischief.

Colonel Dayrell was too anxious to notice the boy's trouble. "What did Hereward say then?" he asked.

"He said he meant to go to the top of the mountain some day, and it would take a week, and he wanted me to go with him, but I said I could not go without asking mamma." Here poor Alan's voice failed entirely; Colonel Dayrell turned impatiently from him.

"Enid, did Hereward tell you where he was going to-day?"

"No, papa."

"My dear," said the Colonel, addressing his wife, "we do not know, after all, that the boys are gone up the mountain; I will go out and make inquiries; we shall find out who has seen them about. Enid, you had better go to bed."

Colonel Dayrell went away; then Mrs. Dayrell sat down by Alan's bed, and let him tell her all the story of what Hereward had said, and how he could not think he meant it, or he would have told her: had he been very wrong not to tell, and was papa very angry with him?

"No, Alan, dear boy, he is not angry with you," said Mrs. Dayrell soothingly, "but he is very anxious about your brothers."

"But is it so very dangerous, mamma? Does papa think that some accident has happened?"

Mrs. Dayrell would not answer that question. "It is very strange that they have not come home," she said.

"Oh, but Hereward said they would be sure to be more than one day away," said Alan. "Mamma, I know he will take care of Geraint, he always does out of doors; I do not think anything can have happened to them."

So they talked on, and Colonel Dayrell did not come home, and at last mamma said, "Enid, my child, you must go to bed."

"Oh, no, mamma, I cannot; let me stay up with you till papa comes home."

"Papa wished you to go, my child."

Enid rose: "I may say my prayers here, mamma, may I not?"

"May I say mine again, mamma?" asked Alan, "because when I went to bed I did not know about the danger, and I should like to ask God to take care of my brothers."

"Give me a good kiss, dear, dear, mamma," said Enid, as she rose from her knees.

"God bless you, my child," said Mrs. Dayrell, folding her in her arms. Enid went to bed comforted.

Colonel Dayrell came home, if possible still more anxious, but without any certain news of the boys: one or two persons had seen them quite early in the morning, going along the road towards the mountain; since then nothing had been heard of them. As soon as the morning dawned again, the Colonel set out in search of them, accom-

panied by several of his brother officers, and some of the men of his regiment. The growth of underwood on the sides of the mountain was so thick that it was possible to hunt there for days for a person, without much chance of finding, and there was no road through it, only a narrow track, often much blocked up and difficult to find. Many persons had lost their way in attempting the ascent, and had wandered for weeks in the thick woods; some had never come home. Hereward did not know of the danger; his father knew it only too well.

Through the whole of that long weary day, Mrs. Dayrell and Enid sat in Alan's darkened room (for the excitement and the tears of the night before had renewed the inflammation in the injured eye) listening to every sound outside, with beating hearts. And the day passed, and the evening came, and yet no news of the children. Ah, if Hereward could only have known how his mother's heart would ache, poor wilful little boy, he would never have left her in that way! but he did not know, and a sharp lesson was needed to teach him the cruelty and foolishness of his act. At last, late in the evening, the sound of wheels was heard, a carriage stopped at the door; Mrs. Dayrell and Enid rushed out and saw two of the kind friends who had accompanied Colonel Dayrell lift out Manly, looking pale and suffering, and Geraint fast asleep, but Colonel Dayrell himself was not there, and—where was Hereward?

CHAPTER IV.

THE MOUNTAIN.

WHEN first they set out on their expedition the boys were thoroughly happy; it was a lovely morning, and before the sun became unbearably hot they were in the shade of the thick wood with which all the lower part of the mountain is covered. They were all capital walkers considering their ages, but, as the day grew hotter, they found the weight of the provision baskets they were carrying rather oppressive. Hereward was so much afraid lest Geraint should become too tired for them to go on, that he carried his basket for him; but, at about twelve o'clock he was obliged to allow them to stop for dinner, for Manly declared that he would just put down his basket and leave it, unless he had dinner at once.

"More, Hereward; more dinner!" exclaimed Geraint, when he had finished the portion his brother gave him.

"You can't have any more now, Geraint," said Hereward, "or we shall not have enough to last till we get to the top."

"But I mean to have some more," said Manly; "I am fearfully hungry."

"More dinner!" shouted Geraint.

Manly took the basket to help himself and Geraint. Hereward started up and seized it. "Manly!" he remonstrated, "you must not do that, you know we agreed to be economical; we shall not have nearly enough food to last us if you will eat it all up at once."

"I don't care; I must have some more," returned Manly; "how can I climb when I am so horribly hungry and thirsty?" Manly attempted to take the basket from Hereward, who refused to give it up, and during the struggle Geraint helped himself very comfortably out of the other basket. The quarrel was ended by the boys both rolling over together, and spilling all their provision on the ground; and, after picking up what they could, Hereward was obliged to compromise the matter by letting Manly keep one bun. He was very much tempted to take one himself also, for he was still hungry; but he resisted the temptation, being dismayed to find how quickly what he had considered a week's supply of food was diminishing. After resting a while, and getting a good drink of water from one of the beautiful mountain springs, they went on climbing, but not so fast as before, for they had wandered from the narrow track, and entered the thick wood, where the bushes and ferns grew so close, and were so matted together with creeping plants growing between them, that it was quite difficult for the boys to make their way, and they were continually losing one another, and having to wait. Then Geraint grew tired, and wanted to go home; and Hereward was obliged to carry him on his back, which was very hard work, but he would not give way.

At last it grew dark, too dark to go any further, and Hereward said they had better lie down and go to sleep, so as to be ready to start again at sunrise. Geraint did not like lying down in the wood, and began to cry. "I want to go home," he sobbed; "I want mamma; I want my bed; I can't go to sleep on the ground; I want mamma to take off my clothes, and put me to bed; I can't go to sleep in my clothes; take me home, Hereward; take me to mamma." So Geraint cried on piteously, and nothing that his brothers could say had any

effect to comfort him, till at last he fell asleep in the middle of a sentence about "poor mamma, all alone at home, crying."

Manly was rather frightened, too, at being in the middle of the wood in the dark; but he was afraid that Hereward would laugh at him if he said so; so he only hugged Geraint as closely as he could in his arms, and soon fell asleep also. Hereward wished to do the same, but, somehow, though very tired, he could not sleep. He was not frightened, so he told himself, though it felt very strange to be all alone upon the mountain at night. He wished he could see his brothers, and he moved closer to them, and took hold of Geraint's hand, but the child turned in his sleep, and drew it away. Then what Geraint had said about "mamma crying at home" came into his mind again, and he could not forget it. "Was she really so anxious about them?" he asked himself; he wished now that he had told her where they were going, it would not seem quite so lonely if mamma knew they were there. Then Hereward wondered what time it was; whether papa and mamma had come home yet; whether Enid and Alan were gone to bed, or what they were doing. Hereward wished himself at home in his own little bed now; it seemed so dreadful to be lying awake there. He would really try to go to sleep; but first he thought he would say his prayers. Mamma told him that God was everywhere, and that He always heard when children prayed to Him; then He would hear him pray in the wood, and He would take care of them, and perhaps send some of His holy angels to watch over them. Hereward was comforted by this thought, and soon fell asleep quietly.

When Hereward woke the next morning, and found that it was broad daylight, he forgot all his troubles of the night before, and thought of nothing but of hastening to the top of the mountain. Geraint began by crying again for mamma; but as soon as Hereward showed him the buns he was quite happy. Not so Manly; he "did not like buns for breakfast," he said; he "was thirsty, he wanted some milk;" he "did not like water;" he "wanted to go home;" he "should not go on; what did he care about getting to the top of the mountain?" he "was tired of climbing;" he "liked much better to go to the harbour and see the boats." "Hereward might go on if he liked, but, for his part, he should go home." Hereward had great difficulty in persuading him to go on at all, he was cross and sulky, walked very slowly, and at every difficulty called his brother back to

come and help him. Hereward got tired of this at last, and declared that he would not come back again; he had "enough trouble in getting Geraint along;" Manly "must shift for himself." Soon after making this speech, Hereward heard Manly call again, "Hereward! Hereward! come to me." He kept his word this time and would not go at first; but Manly did not follow, and after a few steps he stopped, and shouted to him to "come on."

"I can't come indeed, Hereward," called back Manly; "I have hurt my foot so much."

"Nonsense," said Hereward, crossly; nevertheless, he went back with Geraint. It was but a little way, but the thick bushes prevented their seeing each other. Manly was sitting on the ground, with one leg doubled up under him: he was very white, and his eyes were full of tears.

"What is the matter?" asked Hereward.

Manly tried to answer, but burst out crying instead.

"Get up, can't you," said Hereward; "don't sit there crying like a great baby; I don't believe you are hurt a bit; I expect it is all a sham." Hereward tried to pull him up, but, as soon as he touched him, Manly gave a loud scream and then fainted. This was a terrible perplexity, but Hereward was a boy of much observation and ready resource, and remembering that cold water had been used for Alan after his accident, tried the same remedy, with good effect, for Manly; the child soon revived, but it was very evident that he was really hurt; he groaned terribly when Hereward lifted him up, and tried to carry him a little way to a clearer space among the bushes, but he was almost too heavy for him. Hereward only thought now of how to get home again, but here was a yet greater perplexity; all the clever plans that he was so fond of making seemed to have gone suddenly out of his head. Manly could not walk home, that was clear; when Hereward took off his boot and stocking the ankle appeared to be very much swollen, and he would hardly let Hereward touch it to wrap his pocket-handkerchief, soaked in cold water, round it. Neither could Hereward carry him, for Manly was nearly as big as himself. He thought he had better leave him there with Geraint, and go home and fetch papa, or some one who would be strong enough to carry him. But when Hereward suggested this plan Manly would not hear of his leaving him. "Don't go away, Hereward!" he implored; "don't leave

me; stay with me, Hereward! I can't be left alone." Geraint joined in the cry.

"But, Manly," remonstrated Hereward, "I must; if I don't go no one will come."

"Let Geraint go then; you stay with me, Hereward; don't go," urged Manly.

Hereward considered: Geraint was so little, he did not like leaving him alone with Manly. Suppose he fainted again, what would Geraint do then? But still less could Hereward make up his mind to send the child home alone. He was so very young, and simple and childish even for his years; he could not walk all the way; he would be frightened; he would lose himself: to send him was quite out of the question. Should they all stay together? Papa would be sure to look for them, when he found that they did not come home. But then no one knew where they were going; they had wandered from the only track, there was not much hope that Colonel Dayrell would come at once to the place in which they were. After much consideration, Hereward returned to his first plan. Leaving the greater part of the remaining provision with his brothers, and giving strict injunctions to Geraint not to move from Manly's side, Hereward set off in what he fancied was the nearest way home.

(To be continued.)

THE FIRST JOURNAL.

No. 1.



ILMCOTE ABBEY. *April 25, 1868.*—I am thirteen to-day, and papa has just given me this beautiful journal-book, with blue binding and silver clasps, and neatly-ruled blank leaves inside. He has written my name "Alice Neville" on the first leaf, and says that I am to record my "first impressions of foreign parts" in this book. For next week we are going abroad for a tour of several months, at least, and I shall cross the sea for the first time in my life. I am so delighted that I hardly know how to express my joy, and I feel as if I could spring up, up—anywhere—at the thought! Ever since I was quite small, it has been my great

longing, my one ambition to go abroad. How I used to envy the Scotts, who lived on the Continent three whole years, and Adelaide Murray, who went to see her aunt at Paris last spring! and how envious it always made me feel to hear them talk of all the beautiful places and things they had seen, and which I only knew from books, though I was only a year younger than Mina Scott! And now I have got my wish, and we are really going abroad, and I shall see Paris, which they say is the most beautiful town in the world, and the German Rhine! and better still, Italy, and the great mountains of Switzerland! Papa has often talked to me about them all, and most about Italy, which he says I shall like best of all; and certainly I think so too; for I have always particularly longed to see it, ever since I read those beautiful lines of Goethe—

“Kennst du das Land wo die Citronen blühen?”

This winter papa has been making me read a long history by a Monsieur de Sismondi, all about the Italian cities in the Middle Ages, and when I used to get tired of writing notes and abstracts from it, he often told me I should be glad of it some day, and now I understand what he meant. What was much pleasanter, he has let me read some wonderful poetry out of Byron's “Childe Harold,” which was always one of the books I was never allowed to touch; but now papa says I may read as much of it as I like, and it is finer than anything else I know. Then there is a poem by Rogers all about Italy, too, which papa has been reading to us in the winter evenings, and which is beautiful also, though I like Byron better. Yesterday, papa took me for a long walk, and told me all about the pictures which I shall see at Paris and in Italy, and mamma has lent me a large book of hers, which is full of beautiful photographs from them, and which I am never tired of turning over. Then we shall see the great churches, and, what I think must be the finest of them all, the Cathedral of Milan, of which there is a picture in mamma's boudoir—snowy marble rising against deep blue sky.

But I must not waste the pages of my book in talking of what I am to see, and when I think of it, there are several reasons which make me sad at the thought of leaving home. In the first place, we are leaving Agnes and little Evelyn behind—they are too young, papa says, and would only trouble mamma, so they are to stay here; and

Aunt Emily, who lives only three miles off, will come here very often and write to mamma about them. Agnes will miss me very much, and I wish she could come too; but she will have Evelyn, and after all, she is three years younger than I am. I cannot help being sorry at leaving our dear home for so long, and that just when summer is coming, and the long bright days when we sit on the banks of the river, and make wreaths of forget-me-nots, and papa rows us in the boat all the evening. It seems strange to think I shall not be here to pick the first roses which flower, or the lilies of the valley when they come out in the wood. There is one other reason which makes me very sad. Mamma has not been well all the last year, and I am afraid it is for her sake we are going abroad. I heard the doctor tell papa the other day that she required a complete change, and a thorough rest; but the last days she has been better, as she says that change of air will make her quite strong again. I only hope it may.

May 2. Grosvenor Hotel, London.—We came here yesterday, and to-morrow we cross the Channel and leave England. We left Wilmcote yesterday afternoon, and poor Agnes and Evelyn were very unhappy, and cried a good deal. Mamma was very sad too. I saw the tears fall on Evelyn's golden curls, as she kissed him again and again, and seemed as if she could not tear herself away from her darling boy. When she looked back as we drove off, there was such a sad look in her eyes, that it made me cry too; but then she smiled, and told me in her own dear way that we should often hear from home; and that, after all, a year was not so very long. This morning papa and mamma took me to several shops, and bought me a travelling bag fitted up with all I could want, and a beautiful little copy of "Childe Harold," which papa said would be the best guide-book I could have. We start at seven to-morrow morning, so I must not write any more to-night. London is very full and noisy—the crowd in the streets quite bewilder one, and I do not like the rumble of the carriages all night, it sounds so strange and mournful, and is so unlike the quiet of our dear old Abbey. I am tired, too, and Seymour is calling me to go to bed. The next lines I write will be in Paris!

Hôtel Vouillemont, Place de la Concorde, Paris. May 4.—I can hardly realize that I really am in Paris! the capital of la belle France, and the wonderful city I have heard so much talked of, and I am constantly looking out of the window to see if it is really true. I should like to

talk of nothing in my journal but this beautiful place, but I must go back to yesterday morning when we left London. We got up at five, and went by train to Dover, passing Chatham and Canterbury, where we had a good view of the Cathedral, which I had never seen before. Directly we reached Dover, we went on board the steamer, which soon started. The sea was quite calm and smooth, which I was very glad of, as I had never been on the sea before, and I was afraid of being ill. We all stayed on deck, excepting poor Seymour, who went down to the cabin directly and was very miserable. Indeed all the people in the cabin looked like so many corpses, all lying down with a resigned air on their faces, as if they were only waiting till the ship started to be ill; and I pitied them with all my heart, though I wondered how they could stay down there, when it was so pleasant on deck. There was a nice breeze as we left the shore, and we had a grand view of the old Castle, crowning the long line of white cliffs. Very soon we came in sight of the opposite shore, and could clearly distinguish the churches of Calais. As we drew nearer we saw the two piers, which stretch out a long way into the sea, and were covered with French soldiers, in red coats and white leggings, lounging about in groups. We landed close to the station, and walked to the train at once; the guard was most polite, and gave us places directly. It seemed so strange to hear all the people talking French, and even the advertisements on the walls were quite interesting to read, now they were in a fresh language. The train soon started, and as we passed the walls and trenches of Calais, which is still a strongly fortified town, I thought of Edward III. and good Queen Philippa. The country, all the way to Amiens, was very flat and marshy, and I was chiefly occupied in watching our fellow-travellers—a smart Parisian lady and her little girl, who were very lively and agreeable. The lady asked if we were going to Paris, and on papa saying that we were, and that I had never seen that city before, she threw up her hands in amazement, and broke out into exclamations: “Comment! Mademoiselle n’a-t-elle jamais vu Paris? mais c’est tout ce qu’il y a de plus beau?” and so on, in a strain which amused us all. As we drew near Paris the country became much prettier, and there were churches and châteaux peeping out everywhere. Papa pointed out Chantilly, where the “grand Condé” spent the last years of his life, and where Vatel, the cook, killed himself in despair at the failure of

the king's dinner. We passed the great quarries from which the stones for the building of Paris have been taken for centuries, and then by the fortifications which surround the city; but which, as papa observes, have never, and probably will never be used against an enemy. It was quite dark by the time we entered the station, or Gare du Nord, as it is called: a splendid, vast station it is, said to be the finest in the world, and very different from those I have seen in London; but I had very few moments to look at it, as Anselme, our courier, called a carriage of some sort, into which we all got, and he returned to see the boxes examined by the officers of the Douane, or Customs.

We drove through brilliantly-lighted streets with gay shops, and cafés that looked more tempting one than the other, till we reached this hotel, which is a quiet one, in a small street close to the Place de la Concorde. We were all tired, and I was very glad to go to bed; but first I peeped out on the balcony to have one more look at the streets, and to be sure it was not all a dream. I got up early this morning, and being quite rested, papa took me out with him directly after breakfast. It was a hot, sunny morning, which I was glad of, for my first day in Paris. We walked into the Place de la Concorde at once, and I thought I had never seen anything so beautiful; and oh! so different from black, smoky London. It is a large place, with an obelisk brought from Egypt in the centre, surrounded by fountains and statues representing the different towns of France. There are magnificent buildings on every side: before us were the Palace and Gardens of the Tuileries, and opposite a long avenue runs along the Champs Elysées to terminate in the Arc de Triomphe—a beautiful arch erected by Napoleon to commemorate his victories. To the right was the Palais Bourbon, with the graceful spires of the Church of St. Clotilde and the dome of the Invalides towering above, and to the left, the grand front of La Madeleine with its Corinthian pillars. We sat down in the shade of the horse-chestnuts, which were bursting into flower, with the fountains playing around us, and admired the view. The Champs Elysées were full of bright flowers, and the air was filled with the scent of lilacs and laburnum, and the dazzling sunshine enlivened everything, and made the shade still more refreshing. It was hard to believe that this fair Place de la Concorde was once the Place de la Révolution, where the awful scenes of '92 and '93 were enacted, and where Louis XVI. and Marie Antoinette, and the saintly Madame

Elizabeth were led out to die among the shouts of a bloodthirsty populace. I shut my eyes and tried to picture to myself the guillotine erected in the centre of the Place on that morning of January, and the gentle king ascending the scaffold, and turning once more to the people to say, "*Français! je meurs innocent,*" and the roll of the drums drowning his voice; then the hush, and the drops of blood falling on the confessor's face, and the clear words of the good priest: "*Fils de St. Louis, montez au ciel!*" Oh! it is fearful to think of it all! and of the terrible massacres which took place in that gay palace before us, which now looks so bright and festive, as if its walls had never known the sound of tumult or of strife. And yet it is all so beautiful that I soon forgot these sad thoughts myself, lost in admiration of the sight, and I was quite sorry when papa said we must go on if we were to see the Louvre that morning. We went straight to the Picture Gallery. I had never seen any pictures before, excepting those we have at Wilmcote Abbey, but I know a great many from engravings and photographs, and I was very anxious to see the collection of the Louvre. Papa would not show me many, "for fear of confusing my mind," he said, but told me to try and remember a few of the finest. We sat down in the *Salle Carrée*, a large room which contains all the best pictures, and papa told me all their names. The first which struck me was a large one by Murillo, the great Spanish painter, of the Madonna, with her feet resting on the clouds and the crescent of the moon, and surrounded by myriads of lovely cherubs. She is wrapped in blue drapery, and her hands are folded on her breast, while her eyes are raised to heaven with an expression of angelic beauty. Close to this wonderful picture was a little one by Raphael, the greatest of all painters, which won my heart directly. It is called the *Vierge au Diadème*, as the Virgin bears a crown on her brow as she bends over the Sleeping Child, while little St. John kneels with clasped hands at her side. The colouring is so bright, and the Holy Mother's face so sweet and maternal. Another Holy Family of Raphael, called, if I remember right, the *Vierge de François I.*, pleased me very much—the Virgin, surrounded by St. Elizabeth, St. Joseph, and St. John, extends her arms to the Holy Child, who is springing up to meet his mother's embrace. There are, also, two other pictures of Raphael, which I remember well: St. Margaret triumphing over the dragon, and holding the palm of victory in her hand, and the Archangel Michael,

which was a grand figure. The whole of one side of the room is covered by an immense picture by Paolo Veronese, a painter of the Venetian school. The subject is the Marriage of Cana, and papa calls it wonderful; but the size and number of the figures bewildered me, and I was glad to look at the little Raphael again. But one picture, by a painter of the same school as Paolo Veronese, I must mention. It is the Entombment, by Titian, who is preferred to Raphael by many persons, papa says; and I liked it extremely: the figures of the sorrowing disciples are beautiful, especially that of the Virgin, who stands apart, with a look of anguish that still haunts me. We now left the Gallery, and papa took me all round the exterior of the Louvre, and showed me all the courts of the great palace, which, besides being really magnificent buildings, are full of historical interest. The court between the Louvre and Tuileries is called the Place du Carrousel, from the famous tournament which Louis XIV. held here; and I thought of the brilliant court, and all the grand gentlemen who entered the lists that day. On the Place du Carrousel is one of Napoleon's Arcs de Triomphe, a fine arch surmounted with a bronze chariot, drawn by four horses, in imitation of that of Severus at Rome; and the Pavillon de Rohan, a façade ornamented with statues of the great generals of the Republic and Empire, among which I was glad to see that of Desaix, who fell, fighting so gallantly at Marengo, in the moment of victory. We were quite tired by this time, so we went back to our hotel and had a private dinner, as the table d'hôte was at six, when we wanted to be out. At 4.30, we had a fly, and mamma came out for a drive with us. We drove along the Champs Elysées, which were gay with flowers, theatres, cafés, and people, and up the long avenue which leads to the Arc de Triomphe de l'Étoile. We passed under the Arc, which was begun by Napoleon in 1806, and finished by Louis Philippe, and is decorated with fine bas-reliefs and sculptures representing Napoleon's victories. It is a lasting monument of the glories of the Empire, and a really beautiful work of art. "Chaque pierre," as the French say proudly, "nous dit une victoire; chaque nom gravé nous rappelle un héros." After we had examined it well, we drove on to the Bois de Boulogne, the favourite drive of the beau monde of Paris. The grounds are very prettily laid out with lakes and islands, planted with shrubs and flowers, picturesque bridges overgrown with ivy and creepers, and cascades of rushing

waters, which looked very refreshing after the glare and heat of the streets. We drove by the *Pré Catalan*, a flower-garden full of theatres and cafés, and our "conducteur" pointed out a piece of water where the court go to skate in winter. We returned along a shady avenue of acacias, after a delightful drive, and it was nearly seven by the time we reached our hotel. How glad I am to think we have one more day in Paris!

May 5.—Another bright hot day, to my great delight! I jumped out of bed, dressed in a few minutes, and was out on the balcony watching the women with their milk-pails, and the servant-maids in their stiff, white caps, which they wear in the street, instead of bonnets, for some time before papa and mamma were up. After breakfasting on *café-au-lait* and *petits-pains*, we all went out, and turning in the opposite direction from the *Place de la Concorde*, walked round the grand New Opera, which the Emperor is building to employ the working-men, and add a fresh ornament to his beautiful Paris. It is all white marble decorated with gilding, which glitters in the sunshine, and the initials of Napoleon and Eugénie meet the eye everywhere. There are busts of all the great musical composers along the façade, and when finished, I think it will be a very fine building. We then walked to *La Madeleine*, a church which I had often heard of, and therefore wanted to see. It is more of a temple than of a church, and is surrounded by fifty-two Corinthian pillars. Being a saint's-day, mass was at this moment going on; the church was thronged, and as we entered, the organ pealed out in strains of glorious music. I do not know what it was, but to me it sounded like a march of triumph—a burst of Easter joy—which rose ever louder and louder, and then died away into low sweet harmonies so soft and tender, they seemed like angel-voices singing far off. It was beautiful to listen to, and when I looked up into mamma's face I saw tears in her eyes. We stood at the entrance as the church was so full, and up at the high altar we could see the kneeling priests, with boys swinging censers, and clouds of incense rising around them. Suddenly the music stopped, a bell was rung, and all the people sank on their knees. It was the Elevation of the Host, and a few minutes afterwards the priests arose, the crowd dispersed, and the church was left almost empty. We walked round it, admiring the marbles, paintings and sculptures with which it is adorned, and then went on to the *Place*

Vendôme, where stands the great column erected by Napoleon in 1806, from the bronze of the Austrian and Russian cannons taken at Austerlitz. The names of the victories of 1805 are inscribed on the column, and the statue of the great emperor himself looks proudly down from the summit. Papa now called a "voiture de place," and ordered the "cocher" to drive to the Hôtel des Invalides. It was just twelve, the hour at which the tomb of Napoleon is opened to the public, and I had begged papa to let me see it, as I cared almost more about that than anything else in Paris. We got out at the entrance of the great dome, which towers above the buildings where the old pensioners live, and went in. It seemed quite dark after the bright sunshine outside, and the dim light made the church all the more solemn. Gradually we made out the different tombs: before us was the high altar, to the right and left the tombs of Turenne, of Vauban, the great engineer of Louis XIV., and of Prince Jerome; and in the centre a plain marble tomb, only distinguished from the rest by the wreaths of everlastings which hung there, and which told us at once that it was the last resting-place of Napoleon. Two old Invalides, with medals on their breasts, and scarred, withered cheeks, were standing close by; and Casimir Delavigne's lines came into my head:

"Ceux qu'à ta voix Desaix guida
Viendront sur l'ombre consulaire,
Du vainqueur de la Bormida
Courber leur gloire octogénaire.

"D'Austerlitz rêvant près de toi,
Là viendront d'autre frères d'armes,
Sur leur vieil Empereur et Roi
Là couleront leurs vieilles larmes.

"Tu seras fier de ton repos
Car tu dois, chez les intrépides
Dormir où dorment les héros,
Sous les drapeaux des Invalides."

Yes! I am glad they brought home his remains: it was cruel to let them rest in that lonely island far away from the France he had loved so well, and where he had so longed to sleep. It was strange to think that the tomb before us contained all that remained of the marvellous man who so often changed the face of Europe. His glory always fascinated me, and though, of course, one cannot really admire him,

one likes to hope that he learnt, in his dreary exile, to see the vanity of human greatness and turn to Him who alone is truly great. Leaving the Dôme we drove back to our hotel; and in the afternoon we again had a voiture de place, and drove up the Rue de Rivoli, where all the gay shops are, to the banks of the Seine. We crossed the river by the Pont Neuf, where there is a fine equestrian statue of Henri IV.; and papa showed me the prison of the Châtelet, some stern-looking old towers, which I looked at with interest as the spot where poor Marie Antoinette lingered in captivity. Near the Châtelet is the Colonne de la Paix, erected by Napoleon after the peace of Tilsit, and inscribed, as usual, with his victories; a golden figure of Peace occupies the summit, while four sphinxes lie at its base. We drove on to the gates of Notre Dame, where we got out, and took a good look at the exterior. It is a magnificent cathedral, with two massive towers, richly carved portals, and a graceful spire. But the interior is the best part; I never saw anything so perfectly glorious, though it is quite impossible to describe it—such an array of noble pillars and arches, with three rose-windows exquisitely beautiful in tracery and colouring, and the sun shining through the stained glass and shedding hues of crimson and purple all around. Oh! it was a wonderful sight. We walked up the nave, and into the choir, which is divided off by a gilt screen from the body of the church, and looked at the numerous side-chapels: they are full of marble statues, pictures and other decorations, and the ceiling is all painted in gold stars on a blue ground. In one of them we saw the tomb of the good Archbishop Affre, who was slain on the barricades in 1848. We then returned to the gates, and stood some time before we could tear ourselves away. I thought I could look down those arches for ever; and as I looked I tried to think of all the historical events and great names which are inseparably connected with Notre Dame. The Crusaders and St. Louis, and the Valois and Henri Quatre, and Louis XIV. and Louis XVI., all came into my mind; and most of all I thought of Bossuet thundering against the vanities of a frivolous court, above the lifeless corpse of the great Condé, and of Lacordaire speaking from that pulpit, in glowing words, of the love of God and the blessedness of His service. Leaving Notre Dame at last, we went into the sacristy and saw the treasures of the chapitre, which mostly consist in costly reliquaries set in precious stones; the gifts of royal personages or high-born ladies. But what I cared for most was a

beautiful ivory crucifix given by Louis XIV. to Sœur Louise de la Miséricorde, once Mdle. de la Vallière, and left by her to the chapter of Paris. We now walked to the Palais de Justice to see the Sainte Chapelle, a Gothic church built by Saint Louis to receive the crown of thorns. It has a beautiful golden flèche, or spire, which shows all over Paris, and had already attracted my attention that afternoon. The interior of the Sainte Chapelle consists of two chapels, one above the other; the upper church is reserved for the opening of the law-courts and other state occasions, while the lower is used for ordinary services. The stained glass, of which all the windows are made, is wonderfully brilliant in colouring; and every part of the church is finished up with painting and gilding, which altogether has the most lovely effect. In the upper chapel there are still two recesses in the wall which were originally intended for King Louis and his mother, Blanche de Castille; and there is a little room shut off from the rest of the church by a grated window in which Louis XI. used to attend mass, as he did not dare to venture openly into the Chapelle, for fear of assassins. A great deal of the stained glass was broken by the mob during the Revolution; but it has since been restored to all its former beauty, and it certainly is quite a gem of a church. Mamma says it is the loveliest church in the world, to her mind, but I think the grandeur of Notre Dame impressed me more. We passed on from the Sainte Chapelle into the Palais de Justice, and in the Salle des Pas Perdus, so called because prisoners who are declared "not guilty" are taken there, we saw a fine monument erected to the memory of Monsieur de Malesherbes, the venerable councillor who so nobly pleaded the cause of Louis XVI. before the Convention, and subsequently lost his life on the scaffold himself during the Reign of Terror. In the centre is a statue of Malesherbes with figures on each side: one, Immortality, offers him a crown; while the other, Fidelity, holds a heart, and has a dog at her feet. Below is a bas-relief of Malesherbes bearing the fatal news to Louis XVI. in his prison. We now turned homewards, lingering along the quays of the Seine to enjoy the beautiful evening, and admire the view. The river, with its handsome bridges, looked very fine; and on the opposite bank the towers of Notre Dame stood out grandly; while further on, the lovely flèche of the Sainte Chapelle, bright with the rays of the setting sun, rose airily above the gloomy old walls of the Châtelet. We sat there, near the Pont-Neuf, some

time, till the sun had nearly sunk below the horizon; and papa, seeing mamma look tired, took us home. I had one more look at the glories of the Louvre and the Tuileries, and stood once more on the Place de la Concorde, and sat under the flowering chestnut-trees once more. Then we went in, and I lay down in bed that night, to dream of the enchanting strains of the organ of La Madeleine, and of the pillars of Notre Dame, and of the silent tomb under the Dôme of the Invalides.

The next morning, at break of day, we left the beautiful city far behind us, on our way to Germany; but, as long as I live, I shall still bear in my mind the memory of those two never-to-be-forgotten days in Paris.

AUTUMN.



LITTLE while, and all was green,

The summer birds were singing;

The butterflies, in robes of sheen,

Their flow'ry course were winging:

But now the leaves fall from the trees,

The streams are overflowing;

With clouds of rain the autumn breeze

Across the moor is blowing.

A little while, and you and I

As children played together;

No cloud that sailed across the sky

Brought us dull autumn weather.

The skylark sang its happy lay

Above the scented meadow;

Life seemed to be one summer day

That passed without a shadow.

But now, alas! those times are changed,

And age on all is creeping;

Old friends long since from us estranged

Beneath their graves are sleeping:

And when I think how you and I

As children played together,

I feel that summer has gone by,

And it is autumn weather.

LL.B.

A LONDON FAIRY.

By the Author of "Lisa's Dream," &c.

IT was a very great disappointment! the greatest she ever remembered. The places had been taken more than a week ago, and during all that time Ethel had been looking forward to going to the pantomime with her two brothers and the little cousin who was spending the holidays with them; and now, when the day had come, nurse had pronounced her not well enough to go; and as in such matters no one dared to dispute nurse's word, the rest of the party had at last, with many regrets, set off, leaving poor Ethel at home.

It was not the first time by a good many that Ethel had seen the others go to some sight or children's party, and been unable to go with them, for she was often ailing; but she had never felt quite so much disappointed as she did to-day. The missing a pantomime was a serious matter to a little girl of nine years old. However, she choked back her tears bravely, and tried hard to amuse herself with her new doll and story-books, in her own pretty little room next to the nursery.

Nurse had happily found herself recalled by the baby, for her attempts at consolation, though kindly meant, were anything but successful, and consisted chiefly in a rehearsal of the misfortunes which had befallen her former nurslings, and the exemplary patience with which they had been borne. Ethel hated the names of these children; she had heard them so often, and generally, too, brought forward as examples to herself. She knew all about Miss Lucy's broken arm as well as nurse herself, but she felt no pity for it; it had been broken and mended so long ago, whereas her own trouble was present and very grievous.

"But my friend will tell me a real fairy story," said Ethel to herself; "and I think it shall be about a London fairy, such as I saw last year at the pantomime. I am a little tired of the country ones; and, besides, there are no foxgloves or bluebells for them to live in in the winter, so I suppose that is why they come to London. The only

thing is, where can they live? I never thought of that before; but there is no place nice enough or bright enough except, perhaps, the Crystal Palace. They might live among the beautiful ferns there, but then I don't believe they would ever come out in the cold and wet, even to help Cinderella. Oh! I do wish I could have gone to see them!" sighed Ethel, and again the tears rushed to her eyes, and, throwing down the doll, she hid her face in the sofa cushion.

Presently, some one opened the door gently, and a young lady looked in. Ethel was still lying on the sofa, with her hair tossed about in disorder, and her face turned away. She seemed to have dropped asleep; and, before making any noise that would rouse her, the young lady stopped a moment, and looked round the room; some thought seemed to have struck her, for a grave expression came over her bright face. This was Ethel's own room, where she kept all her numerous treasures; to which, evidently, there had been some considerable additions this Christmas-time. But the young lady looked from the story-books and the dolls, and the boxes of toys, to the child on the sofa, and sighed. Whether she heard the sigh or not, Ethel started up, crying, "My friend! my friend! Oh! I am so glad you are come!" And, as Ethel's friend took her in her arms, it made her sad to see what a thin, white little face it was that nestled so close to her. .

"Well, Ethel, so you and I are to have tea together, is that it? I hope you are going to take care of me."

"If you will tell me a story," answered Ethel, with a smile; and then the two sat down together, and the young lady said,

"A story? well, do you know, as I opened the door and looked in, I could not help thinking of a poor little sick girl I have just been to see, and I thought you would like to hear about her."

For a moment, Ethel did not answer; but when she did, she only said,

"Please, not," in a rather fretful tone, looking up at the same time very wistfully in her friend's face.

"What! you don't want to hear about my little girl? I see, poor little Ethel, you want to forget your own troubles first, isn't that it? And you don't think my little girl would help you?"

"I'm sorry for the little girl," said poor Ethel, wearily; "but—but, I am so tired of hearing about 'Miss Lucy,' she was always so good; and she broke her arm, and could not have her birthday party, and she

did not fret one bit. I don't like her; and besides, she is a grown-up lady now, and her arm does not hurt at all; so I can't be sorry for her, can I? Oh! she was so good! you don't know; she never tore her frocks, nor dirtied her hands, nor rumpled her hair, and she always kept her room tidy, and amused the baby, and liked her lessons, and never fretted, nor gave any trouble;" and Ethel ended her long speech with a deep sigh, as she thought how impossible it would be ever to be as good as the example nurse held before her eyes.

"Well!" said her friend, "I don't think my little girl is so good as 'Miss Lucy;' so perhaps you would like her better and feel more sorry for her."

"Still Ethel looked unwilling, and at last, after a few moments' thought, she said, slowly, "I don't think I want to be sorry for her."

Ethel's friend smiled, as she answered, "Because, I suppose, you don't think it will mend matters to hear of other people's troubles? However, little Ethel, I think it very much depends whether—well, never mind; let us have the fairy story then. Is it to be 'Cinderella,' or 'Beauty and the Beast,' or——?"

"A London fairy, please," interrupted Ethel; "such as one sees at the pantomime."

"That requires consideration," replied her friend; "I must put on my thinking cap."

Presently, when she raised her head, after a few moments' thought, Ethel, with her large eyes fixed in much wonderment upon her, asked eagerly, "Where did she live? and what was her name? was it at the Crystal Palace?"

"She was called Ivy, and she lived in a small, dark house, in a narrow, dark street in London."

"But that wasn't her home—not her real home?" interrupted Ethel, eagerly.

"No; her real home was a bright, happy place—brighter and happier than any even you have ever seen; but Ivy did not know this, and the brightest place she knew of was the theatre."

"Oh, I know," put in Ethel again; "they had offended the Queen of Fairyland, and been turned out, and made like real people—like us, I mean—and of course they could not get back again till they had done ever so many difficult things, and been unhappy for a long time. Perhaps they were sent to amuse people at Christmas-time, and that

is why they are larger than country fairies; for one could not see them if they were small enough to sleep in foxgloves or bluebells. But I am sorry Ivy did not know she was going back again."

"Well, Ivy did not remember ever to have seen anything but the London streets. As for a foxglove or a bluebell, I don't think she would even have known what it was. The only bit of fairyland in the narrow street was a French bean. Ivy had picked it up one day, and after playing with it and admiring its pretty spots, she put it into a broken pot of earth, and watered it plentifully. Some one had told her that it would grow, and though she hardly knew what this meant, she watched very anxiously for two or three days to see what would happen. She had seen magic flowers at the theatre which shot up and opened their flowers and leaves in a few minutes; but after she had seen them a few times she ceased to care for them. This bean seemed to be something quite different. At last, there was a crack in the mould; then it seemed as if something underneath were pushing its way upwards, and then a fat green stalk with a curled head appeared. Ivy was delighted; but she would hardly have been more surprised if a fairy had popped out. She sat watching it for hours; and when the head uncurled, and she saw the two first green leaves, she thought it was the most wonderful thing in the world, and wondered whether every bean would do as hers had done. She was a little afraid of it, too—it was so evidently alive, and seemed to know so exactly what it was about and what it wanted to do, as it pushed its way up through the earth, and then climbed higher and higher up the string, putting out fresh leaves every day, and at last the scarlet and white blossoms. The magic flowers at the theatre would never come out at all if they were left to themselves. They were worked by machinery, and they could not put out their leaves and flowers without making some noise, however slight; whereas this came up so quietly and steadily, that, watch as she might, she could never see it grow, but only found every morning that *it had grown*. Jack himself was not more astonished by his Bean-stalk than Ivy was by hers. Was there ever anything so beautiful as the soft, tender green of the first leaves? But what made it grow? this was the question that puzzled Ivy, and to which she could find no answer, though she watched her treasure with never-flagging interest all through the summer. The trees and flowers in the country put out their leaves and blossomed as usual,

but Ivy's bean was all the summer that came to the dark, narrow street; and even this little bit of summer must come to an end at last. The days grew shorter, and there came cold, frosty nights which made the green leaves wither and turn yellow. At last the whole plant shrivelled up and hung lifeless on the string. There were no more fresh leaves, no more scarlet blossoms, and Ivy cried as she looked at it. It was all a wonderful mystery to her; and with all her thinking she never could make it out.

"Some one gave her a tuft of double pink daisies after this, and she was very fond of them, too, and took great care of them; but somehow they were not like the French bean. She had not seen them grow up from the beginning, and so they did not seem to her so wonderful."

"But," inquired Ethel, "she must have seen a great many more wonderful things at the pantomime?"

"Nothing that she thought half so curious as her scarlet-runner. You see she had been accustomed to the theatre all her life. One of the earliest things she could remember was being put by her father into a wheelbarrow, when she was very small, and being covered over with what looked like a large hollow turnip, and then being wheeled across the stage. She could hear hundreds of children shouting with delight when the wheelbarrow stopped, and the clown lifted up the turnip, and seemed so much surprised to find her under it, dressed like a little fairy. Then he had lifted her out, and she had danced a little dance all by herself, and the children had clapped their hands and shouted again; and then she had been allowed to run off to her mother, who was waiting for her close by. There was nothing very wonderful to her in all this, for she knew that it was not a turnip, though it looked so much like one; and she was not at all astonished at the clown, because she had seen him in his queer dress so many times before, and, besides, he was her own father. After this, she had been to the theatre every Christmas. She was one of the little imps, dressed in tight brown clothes, and carrying coloured lanterns, who came at night to work for the good cobbler, and then finished up with a dance, which amused the children very much. They clapped their hands, and said it was just like a dance of real brownies! for it was so dark, they could hardly see what the little imps were like, and the coloured lanterns seemed to be moving about in a most mysterious manner without hands. But this was not half as wonderful as the

French bean. Another time, she and several other little creatures were covered up, all but their legs, in large white things like overgrown turnips; and they went and planted themselves down in a garden near a cottage; and when the man came out to look at his turnips, up they all jumped, with their little thin brown legs looking like roots, and scudded away through the trees. She heard a great clapping of hands, and peals of laughter; but it was not half as wonderful as her French bean—for she knew that the trees were only coloured canvas or pasteboard, and that she herself was not a magic turnip, able to walk and run as other turnips could not, but just 'little Ivy,' the clown's child.

As she grew older, Ivy began to grow taller, just like any other little girl. Sometimes she was a fairy in a water-lily, sometimes a little mermaid, in a coral cave, with seaweed and shells in her hair; sometimes she danced in a wood by moonlight with the other fairies, carrying large fans, like leaves, which changed to gold and silver; sometimes, when the curtain drew up, the children saw at first nothing but a garden of roses, and then out would come the fairies, in some marvellous way, from the middle of the ferns or flowers, and dance together, holding chains of flowers; and when a bright light streamed upon the fairies, changing them all to a lovely green, or an exquisite rose colour, of course the children were enchanted; but still Ivy thought it was not half as beautiful as her French bean. You see she was used to it all, and she knew that the fans which changed from gold to silver and back again were only pasteboard covered with gold and silver paper, and the roses had no scent, for they were made of coloured paper; and the ferns were hard, stiff things, very coarsely painted, when you got close to them; and the lovely colours which streamed upon the fairies, and made everything look so wonderfully beautiful to the children in the theatre, Ivy cared very little about, for she saw how it was all done, and that entirely took away the charm of it. Sometimes she wondered a little about the children whom she saw looking so delighted; but it was quite natural to her to think she was made to amuse them, and she danced away, and did her very best; but she would very much have liked to ask some of them whether they had ever seen a French bean. Sometimes she was very tired of the whole thing; but as long as the pantomime lasted she was obliged to go on every night, dancing and waving.

her fan or her wreath of flowers, and looking pretty to amuse the children; and sometimes she had to do it all over again in the afternoon.

"But at last there came a time, in fact it was this very Christmas, when poor Ivy was very sad. She had grown too tall and thin to be covered up even in a monster turnip; too tall for a monkey or an imp; too tall to sit in the canvas water-lilies—in fact, she was not wanted at the theatre any more. Her little brother went instead, and there was nothing for her to do. She was as sorry to miss the pantomime as you, Ethel, but for a different reason. If she could not go and dance and amuse the children, there was no money to take home to her mother, and as they were very poor people, this was a serious matter. Then, too, her father, the clown, who had amused so many people for so many years, became very ill, and took to his bed, and it was very doubtful whether he would ever be able to amuse anybody again. One very cold day, when Ivy's father was worse, and her mother was sitting by him, crying, Ivy felt so sad that she thought she would go out into the streets, she hardly knew why, but in the hope that something might happen to help them all. A kind lady had once given her a penny for picking up her parasol, and perhaps now some one would see her and guess how cold and hungry she was. So out she went; not to beg, but to see what would happen. She wandered on for some minutes, without meeting any one who took the least notice of her; and then she came into a very crowded street, where the people were scrambling and pushing along, as if they were all in a violent hurry. Clearly, they were all much too busy even to look at poor Ivy. If she had looked at all like a fairy, perhaps, some of them might have stopped; but she didn't. She had on a dingy old frock and a little torn black hat, and very old shoes, so that no one could guess she was the London fairy who had looked so pretty and danced so nicely at the pantomime. It was very dismal out in the cold streets, but Ivy did not like to go home, for there it was just as dismal; and besides, it made her so sad to look at her sick father and her poor worn-out mother, and feel that she could do nothing to help them. So she wandered about growing very tired; but no one gave her a penny or even looked at her."

"The people she amused ought to have given her something," said Ethel, decidedly.

"Perhaps so, and perhaps they would have done so, but they did not know her. At last, as it grew dusk, and the streets grew more and more slippery, Ivy thought she would go home; but just as she was turning round, a baker's boy stumbled against her, her foot slipped on the greasy kerb-stone, and down she fell. The busy crowd did pay some attention to her now. They gathered round her, talking, and asking questions, but Ivy could not answer them, and did not even hear them. At last some one suggested taking her to a hospital; and, when she came to herself, Ivy thought she must be dreaming, for she was in a large bright room, with pictures on the walls, and rows of clean white beds down each side. It looked very pleasant, but it was quite a strange place, and Ivy began to cry, partly because her leg hurt her, and partly because it was all so strange. Besides, how frightened her mother must be that she had not come home! Ivy started up as she thought of this, but she felt faint and giddy, and, before she could attempt to leave the bed, up came one of the nurses, and talked to her so kindly that Ivy consented to lie down again, on the understanding that her mother should be told where she was, and should be allowed to come and see her the next day."

"Is she in the hospital now?" asked Ethel, quickly. "When is she going to Fairyland? I should think she had done enough now, and quite deserved to go back again."

"Yes, she is still there," said Ethel's friend, answering the first part of her question; "her leg is much better, and we hope in a little time to send her to stay by the seaside, only we want some new warm clothes for her first."

"The people that used to see her dance ought to give her new clothes and things," said Ethel, more emphatically than before.

"Perhaps you were one of them, Ethel," said the young lady, very quietly.

"I am not 'people;' I am only a child," answered Ethel, after a pause; "and I haven't got any money to buy clothes." Then suddenly looking up, as if an idea had struck her, she added, "I do believe Ivy is the little sick girl you have been to see, and that you wanted to tell me about, isn't it?"

Ethel's friend only nodded; but if she had expected to get any pity for Ivy, she must have been disappointed; for, after a few moments' silence, Ethel announced, in a very unconcerned voice, "Mamma said

she would take me to the pantomime next week, if nurse would let me go."

"Well, little Ethel, I hope you will be quite well by that time, and able to enjoy it very much; you must tell me all about it afterwards," said the young lady, cheerfully.

No answer; but, after twisting about a little on the sofa, Ethel whispered half aloud, half to herself, "It isn't so wonderful as the French bean; but I don't care, I like it much better;" then quite aloud, she added, "I have got a pot of snowdrops just coming up; would you like to see them?" and slipping down, she fetched the pot from the window and put it in her friend's hands. The little white buds and green leaves were just pushing through the earth.

"Perhaps Ivy would like to have them," said Ethel, slowly; "and I think I should like her to have them."

"Then I will take them to her with your love," said the friend, kissing her; "and I am sure she will be very pleased to watch them come up, and she can take them with her when she goes to the seaside."

It was wonderful how Ethel's face brightened after this, though she was very fond of the snowdrops herself; she looked happier than she had done all day, and when nurse had brought in her own little tea-things, she grew almost merry as she poured out the tea. It was growing quite dusk now, but still the two friends sat on by the fire-light and would not have candles. "It was so much more cosy," said Ethel, "to talk in the dark."

She was not quite satisfied yet about Ivy, and when the tea was gone, she began again, rather anxiously, "You did say that the dark street was not her real home, didn't you? When is she going back?"

"That nobody knows," answered her friend; "it may be very soon, or she may have to wait a great many years; perhaps till she is quite an old woman."

"What made her be turned out of Fairyland?"

"I did not say that she ever was in Fairyland, Ethel. I said her real home was a very bright and happy place; but neither she nor any of her relations know what it is really like. A very, very, long time ago, two people lived in a beautiful garden; it was more lovely than anything you can imagine, and they were very happy as long as they were good; but one day they disobeyed the great King who had

put them there, and then they were turned out; and neither they, nor any of their children, have ever been able to find their way back. Ivy is one of those children; and this is why she lived in the dark



street; but it was not her real home, any more than this pretty room is my Ethel's real home."

"I understand now," said Ethel, gravely; "and does Ivy know about it?"

"Yes, she has learnt a good many things at the hospital, and she knows now Who made her French bean grow, and why it was so much more wonderful than anything to be seen at the pantomime."

Here the conversation was broken off, for the two brothers and the little cousin had come back, and were to be heard on the stairs laughing again over the clown's jokes.

Mamma, too, came into the room, and was not a little astonished to see her poor little girl looking so bright and cheerful; but she was more astonished still, when Ethel ran up to her and, throwing her arms round her neck, whispered, "I don't want to go to the pantomime next week, if you will give the money to buy things for Ivy; and may I go and see her instead?"

A few words from Ethel's friend explained matters, and mamma readily granted both requests; and when next week came, and Ethel went with her friend to the hospital, taking a doll and some story-books, as well as warm clothes, for Ivy, she felt very happy. Ethel's friend felt happy, too, as she watched the two children; saw Ivy's delight in the snowdrops, and heard Ethel's whisper, "It is much better than the pantomime." A few days afterwards Ivy went to the seaside. Whether she or little Ethel will ever grow strong and well, we do not know, but they are both learning to be patient, good children; and Ethel has found out that the best way to forget her own troubles is to try and help other people out of theirs. She is not more sorry for "Miss Lucy" than she used to be, but nurse does not hold her up as an example quite as often as she did; indeed, when she goes to see "Miss Lucy," she sometimes begins to talk of "Miss Ethel" as if she were the pattern; but, of course, Ethel does not know this. Ivy has seen wonderful things at the seaside, but nothing that she likes better than the French bean.

Some day, when she and Ethel have learnt all they have to learn, and done all they have to do, we hope they will go—Ivy from the dark street, and Ethel from her pretty bright room—to their real home, in the place which is brighter, happier, and more beautiful than Fairyland.

SELINA GAYE.



NATURE AT THE CAPE OF GOOD HOPE.

THE SPIDERS AND THE BUTTERFLY.



THE brown spider was as "busy as a bee;" he had cast his long web upon the winds, hoping that it might be wafted above the low forest shrubs to some adjacent tree, and become securely entangled among its branches, for so he would be enabled to construct a net suitable for the capture of his prey, which consisted of insects of many various kinds; and thus he was proceeding with his work, high in air among the lofty forest trees, whilst the bright coloured China spider was stretching the golden meshes of his web upon the low shrubs which spread their slender branches beneath the trees on which the brown spider was employed; the yellow silken webs of the China spider shone brightly in the morning sunbeams, whereas the grey and inconspicuous net of the brown spider was all but invisible.

Thus the spiders spread their snares, each according to its own method, with the same fell intention of capturing all that came across their respective paths.

The brown spider, when his net was completed, retired to a stem, and there took up his position upon the branch of a tree from whence he could watch the progress of his snare without being observed; the bark of the branch upon which he had placed himself so closely resembled his own colour that it was difficult to distinguish the spider from the small knots or protuberances of the bark of the tree; whilst, on the contrary, the China spider, when his work was finished, seated himself conspicuously in the very centre of his web, which was displayed upon the gay flaming shrubs which grew within the open spaces of the forest.

"Why do you do that?" said the brown spider to his gaily-coloured companion; "why do you place yourself in the centre of your net? it is a most insane proceeding! you will certainly scare away all the game. See what pains I have taken for the concealment of myself and my work. Take my advice, comrade, and hide yourself beneath the leaves, for your bright colours will render you conspicuous for miles

away; the golden meshes of your web, too, are enough to scare away everything—but there, it does not signify, and it will be all the better for me, so I will leave you to your own folly.”

“It is all very well for you to hide yourself,” replied the painted spider; “indeed it is the wisest thing that you can do, for you are not worth looking at—not fit to be seen in your old rough rusty-brown coat; behind a stem is just the place for you.”

“I will stand none of your insolence!” indignantly replied the brown spider; “if you are not more civil a fight will terminate our argument. Am I to be abused because I do not wear a ‘coat of many colours?’ Is it paint that distinguishes individuals?—that takes precedence in this world? Is yellow or blue more respectable than brown? I do not believe in gaudy colours, they are mere pigments; even your net is of a golden hue. What is the use of all this outward show? of all this pomp and pride and nonsense? Bah! I hate it all, and glory in my brown coat.”

“Pray do not lose your temper,” said the China spider; “wait a bit, and you will see; time will show you the value of my gay colours;” and he shook himself impatiently as he sat in the centre of his web, making its golden meshes to tremble and glitter in the bright sunshine, whilst his own gay colours were reflected in their bright rays, and he looked more like a lovely blossom upon the low brushwood which was gently shaken by the wind than like a spider.

Thus the eyes of the brown spider were opened to the stratagems of his rival.

“Oh oh!” exclaimed he, “I now perceive what you are driving at; I see your object plainly; it is treacherous and vile! You are passing yourself off as a flower, for the purpose of deceiving those poor butterflies! a most underhanded method of obtaining a livelihood—treachery and deceit. I would scorn to earn my bread in such a manner. No! let me snare whatever comes across my path in a fair straightforward way; I will never deceive my victims.”

“Oh you need not pretend to be so scrupulous,” replied the other spider. “Why do you so closely resemble the bark of that tree? Is there no treachery or deceit in that? Indeed I cannot discern the great difference which you seem to imagine exists between yourself and me; it is merely the old tale over again, ‘two of a trade, &c., &c.’; but gently, gently, here comes the forest butterfly, with her golden-banded wings,”

and again the China spider shook himself impatiently upon the glistening meshes of his web.

Gaily flitting from flower to flower came the pretty orange-banded butterfly* of the woods, quaffing nectar from their slender tubes, as she glided on beneath the checkered shade regardless of all danger; she had been sporting with her companions in many a merry gambol through the air, and amongst the pale blue blossoms of the *Plumbago capensis*.† Upon the broad leaves of the *Strelitzia*‡ she had been basking in the bright morning sunshine; alas! poor "child of the sun," she was not aware of the snares that were prepared for her by the rival spiders, who had stretched their nets in opposition to each other, and were greedily watching her proceedings, each hoping that she would be taken in his own net, and not in that of his companion; and again the painted spider shook himself upon his web, as a fair blossom might have been shaken by a passing breeze; his glittering colours caught the eye of the forest butterfly, and mistaking them for a flower she quitted her sunny seat and darted into the fatal snare. It was too late to retreat when she discovered her mistake; her slender wings and limbs were entangled in the meshes of the China spider's net; the gay deceiver was upon her!—too easily had she fallen a victim to his cunning wiles.

Meantime the less pretentious scheme of the brown spider had been equally successful in trapping the prey he coveted; so much so, indeed, that he had no time for noticing the triumph of his gay neighbour below, and thus each went on to his dying day—as their descendants go on still—believing their own plan the best for entrapping the unwary; and there are, unhappily for themselves, quite as many moths and butterflies ready to be caught by well-feigned sobriety of manner as by the gauds and gay appearance of the frivolous-minded.


M. E. BARBER.

* "The orange-banded butterfly of the forest, *Pyramus Hippomene*. This butterfly strikingly resembles the European *P. Atalanta* (the Red Admiral); the latter, however, does not possess the tails that give the peculiar appearance to *P. Hippomene*."—*Rhopalosua Apices Australis*.

† *Plumbago capensis*, a shrub dispersed through forests or the edges of woods, with spiked blue flowers.

‡ *Strelitzia*, "a noble genus of stemless plants, with broad or narrow petiole, often glaucous leaves and tall scapes, bearing brilliant orange and blue or white flowers."—*The Genera of South African Plants*.

A CHAPTER OF MISERIES.

“HAT are you considering so earnestly, Charlie, if it is fair to ask?”

“Oh, Aunt Emma, I was building castles in the air, and thinking that a voyage up the Nile would just suit *me*. I could lie upon my couch on the poop under the awning which you told me there was in your boat, and see everything as we passed along; and how pleasant that would be!”

“Yes, my Charlie, I wish indeed that you and many poor children who suffer even more than you do, without half so many comforts to make their sufferings bearable, could have such a pleasure; but even if you could, I do not know whether it would make you so happy as you may think.”

“Why not, Aunt? It seems to me your journey was all pleasure.”

“*Now* you are foolish, my boy! Did you ever hear of anything being all pleasure? unless indeed it lasted some very short time. For my part, I do not think it would answer; we should soon tire of it; it would be like having nothing but sweets to eat: we want more substantial things—even bitter things now and then, eh, Charlie? And I can assure you a Nile voyage is not without its drawbacks, though I never made a practice of dwelling upon them.”

“Well, Aunt, I wish you would for once just count up and tell me all the disagreeable things you met with, and make them as bad as you can, please, and then I shall not wish so *very* much to go out there.”

“A catalogue of miseries, eh, you unconscionable Charlie? You want to hear all my small misfortunes and rejoice over them.”

“Now, Aunt, you are joking. How could I wish *you*, or indeed anybody, to have misfortunes! You *know* I do not; but I should like to hear about the ‘drawbacks,’ as you call them—to have both sides of the story, you see.”

“Well, then,” said his aunt, “in the first place, it is not all smooth water and plain sailing. It is pleasant enough to lie on a couch and

watch the villages and trees, and perhaps crocodiles on the bank, as you pass idly along, as I know myself, for I could do nothing else for some time after severe illness ; but you may have a sudden storm, and be in great danger almost before you have time to be conscious of it. I remember one of these storms very well. We were ascending the stream, and keeping rather near to the eastern bank, which is rocky, and in the rocks are many sepulchres. There are groups of them at Isbayda, Tel el Amarna, and Dayr el Kossayr. Here and there, where there is room between the rocks and the river, are palm-trees and plantations of Indian corn. Presently a bend in the river brings you within sight of the grand precipices of Gebel Aboufoodeh, which descend abruptly into the water, and are in some places rent into natural chasms, the resort of numbers of wild ducks ; in others like those I have mentioned before, honeycombed quite high up with excavations, originally tombs, but afterwards, in the early days of Christianity, used as places of refuge from persecution, or as dwellings for hermits and holy men.

"I was lying, as I said before, weak from recent illness, thinking that somewhere hereabouts St. Athanasius sought shelter, and looking at the beautiful glow thrown by the setting sun upon the craggy cliffs, the deep shadows in some parts throwing into relief many a cavern and broken rock. Two cangias in full sail were flying before us, looking like huge white birds skimming the water ; a large dahabieh, somewhat like our own, had furled its sail, and lay idly upon the water with its masts and ropes in graceful repose, and its sailors grouped together preparing their supper ; the river was like a sheet of glass, reflecting the last rosy colours of sunset, when suddenly a few large drops of rain fell, heavy clouds enshrouded us, the wind rose in fearful gusts, and in an instant Reïs, pilot, sailors, dragoman, servants, the very cook, were hard at work and in a state of great agitation. The sail let loose flapped ominously, and great exertion had to be made to secure it and to reach a place to anchor in. We, of course, retreated to our cabin. Then the khamsin came on, a hot wind, which brings clouds of fine dust which penetrates everywhere and is intensely disagreeable. There was also vivid sheet lightning. It was not long, however, before we were housed beneath a bank, and in a few hours the storm lulled as suddenly as it had arisen, and looking out, I saw that we had a guard of about twenty men, sitting in a

circle, with the never-failing pipe, who were to watch during the night; as, without such a precaution, many things might be stolen while we were asleep.

"The part of the river I have been speaking of is considered so dangerous that a Reis who is in doubt of the weather cannot be obliged to pass it unless the party requiring him to do so give him a guarantee that he shall be saved from loss if any accident happen."

"I see, Auntie," said Charlie, "that it was not all quite so smooth as I thought. But now for the miseries: what is number one?"

"What do you think of the plague of flies? There are two kinds. In some places you have myriads of sandflies—tiny things like midges which get into *everything*; into your eyes, into your nose and mouth, into your tea, your candles, your books, and cover the paper you attempt to write on. This is an enemy you *cannot* vanquish. Fortunately he only appears now and then at particular places; but the common black fly is *everywhere*, and, unless in very rainy weather, accompanies you the whole way up and down the Nile. With him you wage war; carry on operations offensive and defensive. During meals, two servants stand with fly-flappers, which they ply most vigorously the whole time you are eating, and contrive to keep the intruder at bay. At other times you keep a fan or a fly-flapper at hand and drive him off yourself, or if you want to write you very often envelope your head and face in a gauze veil.

"Mosquitoes you defy by means of a curtain of fine net, which you draw down closely over your bed.

"But there is another enemy still worse, which, in the vicinity of certain villages, will make fierce attacks upon a boat—that is, the *hornet*; and I confess to having been horribly afraid of him, especially when he came in force. The sting is exceedingly painful, as one or two of our party knew to their cost. Rats are sometimes a 'misery' to travellers, but we were not much annoyed with them. The boat had been sunk to drown them, and we had a cat. But there were some individuals who were quite a 'misery' to some of our party, though not to me, and I suspect would have been rather a delight to you, Charlie. These were monkeys belonging to the sailors, who had no less than *seven*, which they procured on the way and were taking to Cairo to sell. I formed a friendship with two of them, 'Abd-er-aboo,' a good-sized black monkey, who was very fond of fruit and

sweets, and who used to jump into my arms and on my shoulder, and devour pomegranate-seeds, and 'Fat'meh,' a tiny grey monkey, which was dressed up in a little coat, and was a very comical creature. These two were very much at liberty, and used to invade the cabin on all favourable occasions—to the terror of one lady, who could not bear them, and whom it seemed to be their particular delight to torment when they found an opportunity."

"Oh, Aunt, I think the monkeys would almost have made up to me for the hornets and the flies. Had you any other miseries?"

"I do not recollect any, except muddy water to wash in, and—yes—but that was no joke, but a real trial, my Charlie—two of us had a most severe disease of the eyes, very common in Egypt, by which we were for a time quite blinded, and from which we suffered intense pain, besides the fear we had of losing our sight, which, however, was mercifully preserved to us."

"Oh, Aunt, *that* was indeed a misery in earnest. Was that the illness you spoke of before?"

"No, Charlie, that was a fever; but it was brought on, I believe, by the imprudence of making a long expedition to see the sun rise from one of the hill-tops; but so beautiful was it, that, though I am told it nearly cost me my life, besides our having run a great chance of being robbed and taken prisoners, I never could regret having gone."

"Oh, tell me about that, Aunt; that *was* an adventure."

"We arrived in the middle of the day at El Hamra, the port of Sioot, which is a considerable town, in fact the capital of Upper Egypt, though a very poor capital it is.

"After our dinner, we took donkeys, and rode to see the town, the way to which is along a causeway, bordered on each side by large sycamore fig-trees, acacias, barberries, a kind of plum-tree, palms, and various kinds of shrubs. On each side of this causeway were great sheets of water left by the inundation of the Nile, and into these lakes every here and there, stretched a garden, which, with its overhanging trees, looked very pretty. Indeed, Sioot was one of the prettiest places we had seen, and behind it was a high cliff all honeycombed with sepulchres hewn out of it. It struck us that it would be very delightful to ascend this cliff in the early morning, and to see the sun rise from thence; and as we were to remain at Sioot the whole of the next day for the purpose of baking bread and getting our clothes

washed, we resolved to carry out our idea. At least I did, and one other lady who fancied to accompany me.

"We had not an idea of danger, such a thing never entered our heads; but we heard afterwards that those hills are much infested by robbers, who would certainly have carried us off for the purpose of getting a ransom had they known of our mad purpose. But as we did not know anything about robbers, of course we did not fear them, and got up very merrily soon after two o'clock in the morning, and as soon as the donkeys made their appearance trotted off, attended by one of the servants carrying provisions.

"We had not long started when a truly Egyptian incident occurred. Galloping to meet us came three or four donkeys, their attendants shouting and gesticulating, and causing ours to shout and scream in like manner. Presently I found myself most unceremoniously lifted from my donkey and placed, *nolens volens*, upon another, which, receiving a smart blow, was sent off at a canter. The same thing was done to my companion, and it afterwards turned out that the animals we were riding were not those we had engaged, but belonged to another party who had stolen a march upon us. The real man, however, was determined not to be done, and claimed us as his lawful property. This little adventure over, we rode on again quietly, and thought the scenery not less beautiful in the solemn stillness of early dawn than we had done when seen in the glowing tints of evening.

"After passing through Sioot, a similar causeway leads to the foot of the cliffs. Often and anxiously did we glance eastward and urge on our good little donkeys, for the silvery moon began to wane and the first rosy hues of morning to appear.

"Very beautiful it was that first approach of day. It made me think of Keble's morning hymn in a way I had never done before.

"The ascent of the cliffs is very steep, equal, I think, to anything I ever climbed in Switzerland; but the little donkeys, urged by wild cries, climbed up like cats, while we were half pushed and half supported by the drivers, for we had a very insecure seat on the queer Egyptian saddles. A nervous person might have been afraid while overlooking the somewhat giddy precipices.

"About half-way up we had to leave our trusty steeds and proceed on foot, and then half running, half leaping, in my eagerness to be before the sun, and only pausing a moment to catch with difficulty sufficient

breath to clamber the rest of the way, and followed by one Arab, I soon reached the summit and saw the rest, a picturesque group, resting upon a jutting crag of limestone, while below again were the donkeys patiently waiting quite alone.

"Now the sun's first beams began to rise above the Djebel Haridi, a long low, uninterrupted line of hills stretching to the east of the river; then the sixteen minarets, and many of the houses and gardens of Sioot, caught the golden tints, and the river and the bridge below were soon in a flood of sunlight; long trains of camels began to pass and repass along the road which winds at the base of the cliff. A pretty and carefully tended burying-ground lay just below, and there were patches of corn crops of brightest green, and groups of palms and other trees, while the white cliffs, broken and jagged, with great cavernous sepulchres cut into them, formed a contrast with the softness of the rest of the picture. By-and-by the whole became covered with a haze of the richest violet colour, exquisitely beautiful while it lasted, which was not, however, long.

"The tombs, which are in tiers at different elevations in the rock, are very numerous and very extensive; often several smaller chambers open out of the large main one, some of these capable of containing only one coffin. Many tombs are lined with paintings, the colours of some being still very fresh, and the ceilings were often adorned with raceful and varied patterns.

"Numbers of pieces of wolf mummies lay scattered about, for Sioot was the ancient Lycopolis, a city where the wolf was worshipped as a sacred animal; and the living wolf, too, is to be found there still, for while some of our party were examining a tomb, one rushed out and fled away, more afraid apparently of the men than they were of him. The donkey-boys killed a horned-snake—an ugly-looking creature, and very venomous, about a foot long. I found several bees' nests in the clefts of the rocks, reminding me of the words of Scripture, '*with honey out of the stony rock have I sustained thee.*'

"We sat down in one of the chambers shaded from the sun, which now began to be overpowering, and partook of the lunch we had brought with us, and afterwards we descended the cliff and made the best of our way to our boat; but on the way I was taken ill, and did not know much of what happened for many days; but I have a dim recollection of a queer figure bending over me—an Arab doctor—who

it seems was brought to see me, and who said, 'Taïb, taïb—good, good,' meaning, I suppose, that I was going to recover, which, thank God, I happily did. I am told that while I was very ill one of our party asked me if we should go on or turn back, and that I said, 'Go on,' which is extremely probable, as I never did like giving up anything I had taken in hand. So by the time I was able to take notice of what was passing we were a long way from the scene of our morning expedition."

LEFT AT HOME.

Little boy blue, come blow me your horn,
The sheep's in the meadow, the cow's in the corn.
Where is the little boy keeping the sheep?
Under the hay-cock fast asleep!



R. and Mrs. Cherry, and the baby, and the nurse, all went away for a week; and John, Robert, and Kerrenhappuck, their sister, were left at home. The coachman was gone to drive Mr. and Mrs. Cherry, the footman was gone to see his friends, the cook had to cook the dinner, the kitchen-maid had to mind the cook, and the housemaid had to mind the house. So there was nobody particular to mind the children; but as the groom had only two horses to mind instead of four, for two had gone away with the coachman, he *sometimes* had a *little* time to attend to John, and Robert, and Kerrenhappuck; but they did not wish to be taken care of, they wished to take care of themselves, and to do exactly what they liked all day—and it was a long time before they found out what they did like to do.

Presently they took a little turn round the place, and came to the stable-door; it was unlocked; they went in. Only Sappho, the old black horse, was at home; she was very quiet, and let them play with her for ever so long.

Then they began to turn over everything; they upset ten bottles of oils and broke seven more, pulled everything out of place and put nothing back again, made Sappho a bed of hay and gave her some straw to eat. Then they found a nice little narrow flight of steps, and clambered up them, and got into the corn-chamber; this was a pleasant place, with an enormous heap of hay in one corner, where

Kerrenhappuck buried herself continually, and heaps of oats all threshed ready for the horses' dinners, and four of the most beautiful things—which Bob and Kerrenhappuck did not understand till John showed them. First of all there was a rather large hole in the floor, and in the hole was a square wooden pipe, which grew bigger at the top; and just where it grew bigger there was a sort of shutter of wood, which you could draw back from the outside, and whatever was in the large open top fell down, and down, and down through the pipe, till it got down to the manger which was just underneath; and so the horses got their corn, and John Cobbledick, the groom, never had the trouble of carrying the corn down the little narrow steps to them. So the next thing John, Bob, and Kerrenhappuck did, was to put all the oats down the four pipes ready for all the horses, and they tried to divide it equally.

Sappho never had had such an enormous supper of oats in her life, and was much excited by it.

Kerrenhappuck was so excited and delighted when they had finished this mischief that she began dancing about everywhere, till she danced into a hole where a manger-feeder ought to have been, and would have fallen through, and through into the manger underneath, only her crinoline spread out and saved her. She was frightened, and cried and screamed, and every now and then she felt herself slipping a bit more, and Bob screamed too; while John ran down to the stable to see if he could not pull her through, but he couldn't. So he stood in the manger and held her legs, and kept her from slipping so much; but she could not get backwards or forwards. She screamed, and Bob screamed, and John "hushed."

At this very moment John Cobbledick, the groom, came in. He heard a dreadful noise in the stable, and could not think what was the matter. There he saw John standing in the empty manger, supporting Miss Kerrenhappuck's legs, every bin overflowing with oats, and dreadful screams coming from the corn-chamber.

"Get out of that this instant, Master John! what are you doing to Miss Kerrenhappuck?"

"Keeping her from being hung," said John.

"She won't be hung, I can see," said John Cobbledick, but he felt rather frightened, and made great haste up to the corn-chamber where the screams were, and the first thing he said was "Hush!" in a very decided manner, and so Bob did hush; but Kerrenhappuck really

could not stop crying. When Cobbledick went up to her he found she was not in great danger, and taking hold of her by her shoulders, and calling to Master John to let go her legs, he soon pulled her up safely. John had got up the steps by this time, and he and Bob rejoiced to see Kerrenhappuck all safe, and she was so glad she soon stopped crying, and thanked Cobbledick a hundred thousand times for pulling her out of that horrid place. But when Cobbledick came to look around and see what mess and mischief the children had made, he determined that they must be punished; and as their papa and mamma were away, and all the other servants were engaged, he thought he must do it himself; and as they had misbehaved in the stable by day, in the stable they must pass the night.

As it was getting rather late, he went into the house and got them some supper, and he brought them bread and cheese and beer; and as they had never had such a supper before, they enjoyed it extremely, and rather liked eating it in a stable; and when they had finished, and Cobbledick had settled the horses for the night, and had put all the oats in the mangers back into the corn-chamber, and had made Sappho a bed of straw instead of hay, and had refused to let John and Bob help him in any way, then he began to make a large heap of straw and hay in the empty stall: he made it look so nice and soft, Kerrenhappuck wanted to jump into the middle, but Cobbledick would not let her, but would only say in a grim manner:

"Keep back if you please, Miss Kerrenhappuck; time enough to try this bed pra-a-sintly."

She could not think why he would not let her try it at once.

Pra-a-sintly, Cobbledick had made the heap just as he liked, and then the children found out what it was for.

"Now, Master John, and Master Bob Cherry, and Miss Kerrenhappuck, you see your punishment for coming into *my* stables and upsetting everything. You came in when you liked, but you won't go out till I like; you will sleep here in this beautiful bed of hay this night."

Bob and Kerrenhappuck began to cry immediately, but John thought he was too old to cry if he could possibly help it; and besides, he did not know if it would not be rather fun to sleep in a stable; so he cheered up Bob and Kerrenhappuck, and they all jumped flop into the midst of the hay, and Cobbledick covered them up with quantities of

sweet hay and straw, and they made a sort of pillows of straw, and were really delightfully comfortable, only it was so odd to think of sleeping in a stable. Then Cobbledick desired them to go to sleep immediately, and went away and took away the lantern, but the moon was so bright they had plenty of light to go to sleep by.

When they woke the next morning they were not in the stable at all, but in their own beds in their own nursery, and they were not undressed. For John Cobbledick had thought that it never would do for John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, to sleep all night in a stable, because they might catch cold,—children being quite different from horses; so he waited till they were *sound* asleep, then he saw that all the doors were open, and all their beds turned down; then he took off his shoes that he might walk softly. Then, first of all, he took up John very softly, and carried him up, and put him into his bed, and he never woke, and only moved his two thumbs. Then he took Bob Cherry, and carried him up and put him into his bed, and he only moved his two middle fingers. Then he took Kerrenhappuck, and carried her up, put her into her bed, and she only moved her two little fingers.

And they never even dreamed they had been carried about in their sleep; and when they did wake in their own beds they could not understand it one bit, and they did not know what to do about washing and dressing, because then they were dressed already.

At last they determined just to wash their faces with a towel, and smooth their hair with a comb, and go downstairs immediately.

Maria so attentive grew,
So civil and polite,
That all admir'd and lov'd her too,
For all she did was right.
Her good mamma entrusted her
A visit once to pay,
And then she said, "Good-morning, sir,
"I hope you're well to-day."

They spent the morning in writing to their papa and mamma, and they wasted a great deal of paper, and got a great deal of ink on their hands, and a little on their faces, and were quite busy till dinner-time. After dinner they thought they would go out.

"I'll tell you what we will do," said Kerrenhappuck; "we will go and pay calls."

"Bother," said John.

"Tisn't bother," said Kerrenhappuck; "it's very nice. We will go like papa and mamma, and we will ask for the people; Mrs. Anderson, you know, and General and Mrs. Moyle, and Miss Nutall, and Mrs. Jackson, and everybody, you know; and if they are at home we must go in, and if they are out we must leave cards."

"I shan't go in anywhere," said John.

"Nor I," said Bob Cherry.

"Very well then, dears," said Kerrenhappuck, "we will leave cards just like mamma, you know."

"But we have not got any cards to leave," said John.

"There are plenty in the card-tray on the drawing-room table," said Kerrenhappuck, "and mamma always lets us take those for anything we want, and I am sure we want them now."

So Kerrenhappuck put on her best hat, and John took his papa's biggest walking stick, and Bob Cherry the old carriage umbrella, with a handle like a carrot, and they filled their pockets with cards from the card-tray, and off they started.

When they got to Mrs. Anderson's it was as much as John could do to ring the door bell, it was so high up; however, he did ring it; but when the big, fat footman came to the door they all felt very much frightened, and could not at all manage to ask for Mrs. Anderson; so they each gave the footman a card, and each card had a different name on it, and then they ran away as fast as they could, Bob Cherry quite overwhelmed with the weight of his big umbrella; and Mrs. Anderson, who had seen them come, and thought they were sent with some message by their papa and mamma, could not at all understand it, when her footman brought in the three cards they had left, on a silver tray; and one was Mr. Willis's the curate, another a Halfpenny card with an advertisement of cheap wines, and the other was one of Mrs. Anderson's own cards. So she desired Jones the footman to run after Master John and Robert Cherry, and Miss Kerrenhappuck their sister, and bring them back; but they ran much too fast for Jones; they were safe out of the gate before he was a quarter down the drive.

As they went on they grew brave, and they asked for the people, and would not go in, but left all sorts of cards on everybody, making

everybody call on everybody else, no matter whether they knew one another or not. They were obliged to leave six cards on Miss Nutall, the last person they called on, in order to finish up all they had with them, for they determined to bring no cards home.

The next day it rained and blew all day long, and they played at every game they knew in the house; and at last they got so tired of everything that it would have been a very fortunate thing if only they had had some one to make them do lessons to employ them.

John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, did not think this, however. At last they determined to go out and get wet for a change, they felt too dry; but the housemaid heard them clatter down the stairs in their thick boots, and she sprang out of a room she was dusting and declared they "should not go out, to come in again as wet as fish, and making every place a proper mess with their dirty boots." John said he would go out, Bob Cherry began to cry, and Kerrenhappuck did not do anything particular. "If you do go out, Master John," said Sarah, "you shan't come in again."

"If I do go out I *won't* come in again, Mrs. Sarah," said John, in what he meant for a very grand voice (but it was not), and he turned round and went upstairs, and Bob Cherry and Kerrenhappuck their sister followed him; and they went into the nursery and had a great consultation, and the consequences were that they determined they would really be Robinson Crusoes.

Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe,
He made him a coat
Of an old Nanny Goat,
I wonder how he could do so.
With a ring a ting tang,
And a ring a ting tang,
Poor old Robinson Crusoe.

There was a pond a little way from the house, and in the pond there was an island—a nice little damp island with a summer-house in the middle. A very nice hut summer-house it was, with a window with yellow and red glass in it, and a door, and a lovely floor, made of large diamonds of slate, divided by rows of little white bones—sheep's trotters—which made white lines nearly two inches wide between the

bluish slate stones; some of the bones were rather loose, and could be pulled in and out, which the children were always told not to do, for it was very pleasant to do it. In the middle of the summer-house there was a round table, and there were stools with twisted wooden legs to sit on, and a seat all round inside, made of wood arranged in a fanciful manner; and outside the thatch of the hut formed an awning, under which you might sit; and the thatch went up in a peak at the top of the roof, and it was altogether a very nice summer-house, but not altogether a good place to live in, though there was a likeness to the pictures of Robinson Crusoe's house on his desolate island. But John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, thought it most delightful—quite out of the way of that troublesome Sarah, and where John Cobbledick would never think of looking for them.

You got to the island across a plank, which made a sort of bridge.

They spent the whole evening settling what things they had better take with them, because they would have no wreck to go to for what they wanted.

The next morning they were busy packing up the things to go. They decided to start after dinner, as soon as John Cobbledick had gone away exercising the horses, for they did not want anybody to know where they were. Kerrenhappuck wanted to take their beds, but John said they could not carry them, and besides it would be much more desert islandy to sleep on the floor in a blanket.

Kerrenhappuck agreed; she wanted to be desert islandy, but she did not much like the idea.

She determined to take her doll Serena Jane, and Bob Cherry took a box of ninepins, and John took useful things—an old knife, and a hammer and some tin-tacks, and one large rusty nail he had had by him for some time. He desired Kerrenhappuck to take her workbox, as she would have to mend Bob's clothes, and also a cookery-book from the drawing-room table, as she would perhaps have to cook; but they all agreed to take no lesson books.

It took several journeys to take all the things to the island, for they could not carry much at a time. They heaped the blankets in one corner, and Serena Jane was set up in another, with the box of ninepins to support her; and the workbox and cookery book were put on the table; and really there was so much running in and out it was wonderful the maids never noticed it, but they were busy the other

side of the house. Suddenly Kerrenhappuck said, "What shall we do for cups and saucers, knives and forks?"

"Oh," said John, "Bob and I each have a stick knife, and we will lend it to you, my dear; and we will take our mugs from the wash-stands to drink out of, and desert islanders never have plates or forks, and we can take your doll's tea-things besides."

So they took the China over in three little baskets, and actually broke none of it. I am sorry to say they took no clean clothes, no brushes, no combs, and no soap. Now there only remained the provisions to take, and they determined to take whatever was left from their dinners.

And they took half a rice-pudding, three parts of a loaf of bread, some slices of cold beef, and a good lot of mince-meat done up in a newspaper, and three potatoes and some salt, also they took some tea and sugar from the caddy. And so they settled into their desolate island, and were wonderfully happy. They jumped with joy. John went head over heels, Bob hopped first on one foot and then on the other, and Kerrenhappuck bustled about in a most important manner, "Settling things, you know, my dears."

Then they explored the island, and chose a place for a garden; for they had made up their minds to live in this island "always." Presently they thought it was tea-time.

"We must light the fire and boil the kettle," said John.

So they picked all the old bits of stick they could find, and made a great heap; but then they found they had no matches to light the fire, and no kettle to boil the water in.

What should they do?

Then John said, "We must make an expedition."

"An expedition?" said Bob and Kerrenhappuck both at once, in low voices.

"Yes, an expedition to the house. The house is our wreck, and we must go softly and get the box of matches off the nursery mantelpiece, and the kettle out of the closet, and then we shall have everything."

So they started very softly and only talked in loud whispers, and went straight upstairs and down again; but the maids did hear them this time, and Sarah would have come at once to scold them for eating such enormous dinners, for she thought they had eaten everything up, and never dreamt they had taken away the remains of their dinners to

a desert island. But Sarah stopped to put a pink bow on her cap, and so the children got away. They heard Sarah calling after them, so they had to go round behind a large rhododendron and into the kitchen garden, where they filled their pockets with gooseberries, and ate some.



At last they got safely back to the desert island, and after a great deal of trouble they lighted a very bad fire, and tried to boil the kettle; and after a long time they made the water rather warm, and made

some tea. They wished for milk, till John reminded them Robinson Crusoe had no milk till he had been some time on his island, and got his goats, and perhaps they might have a goat too some day.

They enjoyed their tea very much, and Kerrenhappuck washed up the tea-things in the pond, and was obliged to wipe them with her pocket-handkerchief, as she had no tea-cloth, and then she dried the handkerchief at the fire. This was all very delightful. They were sure living in a hut was much better than living in a house, and doing everything for oneself was so pleasant. Presently it grew rather dark. Of course they had no candles, so they ate up all the rice-pudding for supper and went to bed.

They rolled themselves up in their blankets, but they were so uncomfortable; the stone floor was so cold, and the pretty sheep trotters were not at all like the soft mattresses at home. Bob was much inclined to cry, but Kerrenhappuck comforted him up, and held him tight in her arms, and Bob soon got warm there and fell asleep; and Kerrenhappuck was so busy comforting Bob, she forgot how uncomfortable she was herself, and fell asleep too. John lay awake a little while, to feel like Robinson Crusoe, but that ended in his soon dreaming about "man Friday."

But while John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, were enjoying themselves so much, the servants were in a terrible fright about them.

When Sarah went into the day-nursery to take away their tea, she found nothing had been touched—and the house was so quiet! She looked in the night-nursery, they were not there—no, not even hidden under the beds. She looked in their mamma's room—no; in the drawing-room—no; in the dining-room—no; in the study—no; in the kitchen—no. Then other maids joined the search; they looked in every room, in every closet, behind every curtain—no children anywhere, no sound anywhere. They went all round the flower-garden, all round the kitchen-garden—no children anywhere.

Then John Cobbledick arrived, and as soon as he heard the children were lost he went into the stable to look for them, and as he went he said to himself, "They shall sleep here all night, this time"—but there were no children anywhere.

So the servants all began to scold one another because the children were lost, and because they were so frightened to think what Mr. and Mrs. Cherry would say when they came home.

And they kept on looking for them everywhere, excepting in the little desolate island, and so of course they could not find them.

The next morning they began to look everywhere again, and John Cobbledick fetched a policeman to help him look, though cook said that was no use, for she was certain they were drowned in the river; Sarah, the housemaid, was sure they were stolen by gipsies; the kitchen-maid depended they were gone to sea. What John Cobbledick thought no one knew, because he would not open his lips.

As the time for Mr. and Mrs. Cherry's return came nearer, the maids got more and more frightened; at last John Cobbledick spoke, and he said he heard the carriage coming, and he desired the maids to stand in the hall, each with a clean pocket-handkerchief to weep into, and the policeman and himself stood on the steps; and when the carriage drew up to the door, instead of the children being there to welcome their papa and mamma, John Cobbledick, the groom, opened the carriage door, let down the steps, and touched his hat, and said, "If you please, sir, Master John, and Master Robert, and Miss Kerrenhappuck, are missing, and we can't find them anywhere. I've called in the police to no purpose."

And the policeman touched his hat, and said, "The case is exactly as this party has stated, sir."

But poor Mrs. Cherry was so much alarmed, she could not bear to stay in the carriage and listen to these speeches; she jumped out of the carriage and rushed into the house, and questioned every maid separately, and all the maids at once, and she took the baby in her arms and kissed it and hugged it. But when she went up into the nursery and saw a blanket gone from every bed, and a mug from every wash-stand, and remembered how the dinner had all seemed to be eaten up, a thought came into her head:

Cuckoo, cherry-tree,
Catch a bird and give it to me;
Let the tree be high or low,
Let it hail, or rain, or snow.

Meanwhile, John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, were enjoying themselves very much. They woke very early in the morning, and certainly they did feel very funny and stiff, after sleeping on the cold ground only wrapped in a blanket; and they sneezed a good deal as if they had colds coming, but they soon pushed open the

door of the summer-house, and saw the sun shining, and they stood in the sun till they were quite hot.

Then they warmed the kettle again—they could not manage to make it boil—and made some tea; they had to eat their bread without butter, and that they tried to like, because it was “desert islandy;” but they didn’t like it, so they ate some of the cold mince-meat instead of butter; but in the midst, Kerrenhappuck suddenly exclaimed, “We must not eat any more of this mince—there is no mince in Robinson Crusoe, you know, my dears.”

But John said, “Bother! Robinson Crusoe got everything from the wreck, and the house is our wreck, I told you, and we got this mince from the house; so it’s all right, let’s eat it up, I’m very hungry.” So they ate up the mince.

Then Kerrenhappuck washed up the breakfast things, and put the house in order, and John and Bob Cherry would have given anything to have gone out hunting, but there was nothing to hunt. So they rummaged about instead. Then they thought they ought to make a fence around the hut; and they piled up a lot of stones, which they had great trouble in carrying from the other end of the island, where they found them, on one side, and at last they were so tired they were obliged to rest; and actually little Bob Cherry fell asleep, with his head on Kerrenhappuck’s lap, and John and Kerrenhappuck had to keep still for some time for fear of waking Bob. Presently he woke, and they began to think about dinner, and they thought dinner ought to be cooked; so they made up a bad fire again, and hung the slices of cold meat from a string which hung from two sticks over it, and toasted some bits of bread, and when the bread and meat were a little warm and very smoky, they ate it and enjoyed it; and then they went to work at the fence again till tea-time, and then they tried to make up the fire; but all the wood they could find was so wet that it smoked worse than ever, and a nice little thin column of smoke went curling up above the trees.

When Mrs. Cherry saw a blanket gone from every bed, and thought of the other things the maids told her, the thought came instantly into her head—“the children are gone desert islanding;” so she gave the baby to the nurse and ran downstairs as fast as possible, and interrupted Mr. Cherry as he was gravely discussing the matter with John Cobbledick and the policeman, and arranging how to continue the search. “Papa, papa,” she said, “I know where the children are, of

course; they are in the island in the pond. Come along and look for them this minute, my dear." And Mr. Cherry answered, "Yes, my dear, you had better go and see, if you like it."

Mrs. Cherry ran down to the pond, for she knew how John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, were always wishing to be cast away on a desert island, and how vexed they were she did not wish it too. When she came to the island she saw the smoke, then she was certain sure; she ran across the plank, and in one minute there she found John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, all trying to light a fire of wet sticks, and they couldn't; and John turned round to tell Kerrenhappuck to look for some more wood in another place, and he saw his mamma watching them; then Kerrenhappuck turned round, and then Bob Cherry, and then their mamma took them all in her arms, and kissed them all for five minutes without stopping. By this time Mr. Cherry, and John Cobbledick, and the policeman, and the maids, were all arrived, and Mrs. Cherry turned round and said, "I told you so; I knew where to find my dear, naughty, darling, troublesome, precious, lost children, and here they are."

So Mr. Cherry scolded them for giving them all such a fright; and Mrs. Cherry kissed them for comforting them by being found; and the policeman told them, in a solemn manner, that "they ought to have been brought before the magistrates, for lighting fires in woods, and behaving like tramps;" and John Cobbledick looked awfully grim at them, and the maids all talked at once.

And so they reached the house. John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, were well washed by nurse, and they were in such a mess in consequence of their desert islanding that she was an immense time washing them, and they were quite tired out and starving before they were ready for tea.

Their mamma came and had her five o'clock in the nursery with them, and they all came down to dessert, and were all very happy, as their papa and mamma quite forgave them the dreadful fright they had given them by their desert islanding.

But when Mr. and Mrs. Cherry heard all about the stable, and the calls, and the desert island, they determined John and Bob Cherry, and Kerrenhappuck their sister, should never again be left at home without some special person to take care of them.

R. A. E.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



B. F. tells us, in answer to "Mortimer Lightwood's" inquiry, that the words—

"God above

Creates the love to reward the love,"

are from Robert Browning's "Evelyn Hope," but do not occur quite in that order.

A man apostrophizing a dead girl whom he has loved without her knowing it, asks whether it is "too late," and whether "each is nought to each;" and he answers his own questions in the verse :

"No, indeed ! for God above

Is great to grant, as mighty to make,

And creates the love to reward the love ;

I claim you still, for my own love's sake !

Delayed it may be for more lives yet,

Through worlds I shall traverse, not a few ;

Much is to learn, and much to forget,

Ere the time be come for taking you."

Can any of our readers inform "Mortimer Lightwood" where the line—

"Thus went the White King to his grave," comes from ?

The riddle sent by "Undine" last month appears to be an old one. Four correspondents have kindly sent the solution :—"I am notable, I am no table, I am not able."

"Agnes Day" asks if any one will send her 100 old penny postage stamps in exchange for 16 foreign postage stamps, or crests? Address, "Lyndhurst House, Hendon, N.W."

"Mary N. Steel." Aunt Judy begs that you will forward the name of the town in which you live, as it was omitted in the address given in your note.

"E. E. B." Miss Corner's versions of "Cinderella," and "Beauty and the Beast," are both suited to the number of actors you mention.

Aunt Judy intends to insert a play in the *December* number of the Magazine, and hopes that "Constance" will find time to learn her part in it before Christmas.

"F. C. L." begs to say that some delay has arisen in carrying out the orders kindly sent for dolls' clothes, in consequence of the great number of applications, and the unavoidably slow working of the school children, but that all the orders shall receive attention as promptly as possible.

"F. W. and L. W." Another correspondent has already communicated with "Twilight" about the sale of a stamp snake. The bazaar at which Aunt Judy knew of one being sold for 10s. is now a thing of the past ; but she has no doubt they could be bought at other bazaars.

We learn from several correspondents, that "Lily's" enigma was written by George Canning. Her version of it, however, is somewhat misquoted ; it should run thus :

"There is a noun of plural number,

Sad enemy to peace and slumber ;

Add to it but the letter S,

And strange the metamorphosis !

Plural is plural now no more,

And sweet what bitter was before."

"Mrs. H. F." has sent the reply to it, in a verse written by her brother :

"I've guessed your riddle, but the change

Does not appear to me so strange ;

For many *cars*, you must confess,

Are balanced by one sweet *carass*."

Aunt Judy would be much obliged if "E. S. B." would send her the answers to his riddles before she inserts them.

"Jay" has forwarded the following quotation from "Land and Water" for September 16th, as she believes the enigma mentioned to be the same as that

sent by "A Travelled Monkey," in our August number :

"ENIGMA.—Sir : In your number of the 2nd inst. I see an enigma or charade said to be by Archbishop Whately. The only answer I have ever seen to it appeared in 'Notes and Queries,' 3rd S., viii., 316, by a correspondent of the above paper, under the initials of F. C. H., and is as follows :—

' *Ignis*, or fire, all men will own
Essential to the life of man ;
Fatuus, a fool, has been, 'tis known,
Cursed and abused since time began.

' Some *Ignis Fatuus*, Will-o'-wisp,
Not seen by day, nor used by night,
Men love, and for their phantom lisp,
When 'tis unseen, but hate its sight.'

—Dudley Cary Elwes, F.S.A."

"A. H." Aunt Judy has applied to the author of the "Little Hunchback," who says that the chorus inquired about was meant to be sung by Assam *alone*. The construction of a suitable fireplace is somewhat difficult to explain ; it should be built of laths and painted canvas, in such a way that the chimney protrudes into the room, and thereby allows space for the Hunchback's body to be discovered in it. Aunt Judy thinks that the matter will not be found so difficult to manage as it may seem—especially if the "Family Council" contains any one with a taste for mechanics.

"Ada" will find full directions for making a stamp snake in the "Correspondence" of our number for April, 1871. Aunt Judy believes that netting silk is the best thing to string the stamps upon. They must *not* be taken off the writing-paper.

"Blanche" recommends the following simple remedy for "Veritas" pet bird, as being less injurious than the cure given in our last number :—"Place a saucer of water under the perch on which the bird sleeps, after it has gone to roost. The red mites will be found in

the water next morning ; this must be repeated until they are extinct."

"Senga." Aunt Judy pays for all contributions that she thinks suitable for insertion in her Magazine ; she does not know what the terms of other Editors may be.

"M. S. G." Mr. Timbs, in his "Curiosities of History" (David Bogue, Fleet Street), says of the origin of "*Blue Stocking* :"—"This term, applied to a lady of high literary taste, has been traced by Mr. Mills, in his 'History of Chivalry,' to the Society de la Calza, formed at Venice in 1400, 'when, consistently with the singular custom of the Italians, of marking academies and other intellectual associations by some external signs of folly, the members, when they met in literary discussion, were distinguished by the colours of their stockings. The colours were sometimes fantastically blended, and at other times one colour, particularly *blue*, prevailed.' The Society de la Calza lasted till 1590, when the foppery of Italian literature took some other symbol. The rejected title then crossed the Alps, and found a congenial soil in Parisian society, and particularly branded female pedantry. It then diverted from France to England, and for a while marked the vanity of the small advances in literature in female coteries. But the *Blue Stocking* of the last century is of home growth ; for Boswell, in his 'Life of Johnson,' date 1781, records of the origin of *Blue Stocking Clubs* :—"One of the most eminent members of these societies, when they first commenced, was Mr. Stillingfleet (grandson of the Bishop), whose dress was remarkably grave ; and, in particular, it was observed that he wore blue stockings. Such was the excellence of his conversation, that his absence was felt so great a loss that it used to be said, 'We can do [nothing] without the *Blue Stockings* ;' and thus by degrees the title was established.

Miss Hannah More has admirably described a *Blue Stocking Club*, in her 'Bas Bleu.' The earliest specimen on record of a *Blue Stocking*, or *Bas Bleu*, however, occurs in the Greek comedy entitled "The Banquet of Plutarch."

Can any of our readers tell "M. S. G." of any cheap little books, containing simple plays or charades, for children? She thinks there are some published at about 3d. each, in a children's series, but cannot ascertain the name."

"Cor Caröli." Apply to some music publisher for the words of this well-known song.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, October 16, 1871.

The young friends who have made so many kind inquiries about Annie H—, will be pleased to learn that she has not only returned from Highgate, and is again the "Cot Patient," but has, providentially, passed through the trying ordeal of a *second* operation on her poor little limb, and that she is progressing as well as the most anxious of her many kind friends and patrons could desire. She left the Convalescent Home a few days before the intended operation, and it would have been gratifying—certainly very amusing to the contributors, if they could have seen the attempts she made to stand, and, with the "good leg," to attempt a few steps, in order to say that she had *walked*. When the dreaded day came, Annie, though only four and a half years old, was very brave and good: she made various small preparations in the morning, and was evidently very nervous in expectation of the trial, so it was thought best to tell her exactly what was about to be done—how that she would be put fast asleep, and would know no pain until she awoke again, and then perhaps only a slight aching for a

time; but that it was hoped she would then have *two* straight legs, and soon be able to use them like the other little girls in running about. Hearing all this with a solemn face, Annie soon dried up her tears, and as Mr. Charles Dickens (who was not a stranger in that very room) says of "Tiny Tim," she was "as good as gold." She laid herself down and closed her eyes like a little heroine: and now she is proud of having two perfect limbs, while also her mother and father are grateful that their little one has been spared to them with such good hopes of complete recovery ultimately.

Some very pleasant surprises have come to help Annie to bear this last trouble: a little box of beads (just the ones she likes), with a letter written to her by two of the young friends; a box of shells collected at Scarborough by two of "Aunt Judy's" nieces, who while enjoying their holiday at the sea-shore did not forget that there were others less fortunate than themselves; and, last of all, a truly magnificent snake, made of postage stamps, with its red tongue and white eyes; exciting admiration and wonder by its length and flexibility: it was made by an invalid young servant (who devotes the proceeds of her earnings to a Convalescent Home), and purchased from her by the kind donor.

Annie's mother brought her some needles and a reel of cotton; and she is now often to be seen sitting propped up with high pillows, very silent, but very busy and intent over a new frock for her dolly; not that any of the small garments she begins have yet been *finished*, but the work interests her, and affords matter for grave consultation with her little friends, "Julia with the golden hair," and Polly, both of whom are her constant companions.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to October 14th, 1871.

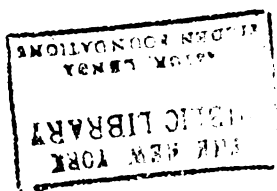
	£	s.	d.
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	1	0
Maude and Mildred (with a box of shells) (monthly)	0	2	0
Minna, Lance, Harry and Emma (annual)	0	10	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
M. A. F. (monthly)	0	0	6
"Gina" (omitted last month)	0	1	0
Evelyn and George, 4s. 6d., Agnes, 4s. 6d.	0	9	0
Estelle, Merford, Wrexham	0	3	6
H. A. R. S.	1	1	6
J. M. G., Chichester	0	3	0
A. G.	0	0	6
Janet and Carry Shore, Lindridge House, Desford, Leicester	0	9	6
Some well-wishers at Beckenham	0	0	4
"Edith," Blyborough Rectory	0	12	0
Charlotte, for Annie	0	1	0
Midge, Hilda, Louis and Baby	0	10	0
G. E. Milman, R.M. Academy, Woolwich	0	10	0
October 8th. In memory of J. D. H., St. Mary Bredman, Canterbury, offertory, £6 15 2; St. Andrew's, Canterbury, collection, £4 4 1; "Johnny's last legacy to his only brother," 10s. Canterbury, Oct. 1st, 1871	11	9	3
Willie, Ada and Rosa Moss (collected)	0	5	6
Gina	0	1	0
Millie, 2d., Prissey, 2d., and Tabby, 2d.	0	0	6
Kate S—, the dying wish of: Oct. 7, 1871, aged 16 years; for seven years confined to her couch	2	0	0
Helen	0	1	0
M. H. (collected from 30 subscribers)	1	8	6
The four Blackberries of Bramble Hill	0	2	11
E. M. Norris, Oaksey, Cirencester, a parcel of clothing for the Cot patient and for general use. A. A. P., hamper of clothing. The four Blackberries of Bramble Hill, New Forest, a box of toys. Frances Cresswell, a "postage stamp snake." Mrs. Huxley, a box of toys.			

Flossie and Mabby, a box of beads for Annie.

Anonymous, a parcel of pictures.
Miss Hughes, some numbers of "Infant's Magazine."

Two months (September and October) of smaller subscriptions than we have been for long accustomed to see have induced us to tell our young friends somewhat more of our hopes about the Aunt Judy 'Cot' than we should otherwise have made known just at present. Our idea has been for some time past that we should realize enough money to form a fund for an Aunt Judy 'Cot' *in perpetuum*; and then, so far from ceasing to collect subscriptions, continue to enlist further interest for the establishment of a second 'Cot' under the same name, so that there might be one for the Girls' and one for the Boys' wards. What has been already collected will support a 'Cot' for many years, as any one must have observed who has studied the accounts; and we have had our fears that this fact might strike our young contributors with a feeling that now we have got all, and more than all that we wanted, and therefore need ask no more. The foregoing statement will rectify this misapprehension if it exists, and show the young people what our real views and wishes have been. We hope we may be forgiven if we are expecting too much; but our expectations have altogether been built upon the generous support which has for so long been given to the Aunt Judy 'Cot,' and we are not without hope of finding many warm supporters of this scheme for giving permanence to the good effected by the labours and self-denials of our young friends. Then, in some far-off time, they may be able to point out to their children the benefits secured to two poor little patients all the year round, by perseverance in a work of charity so well begun, and so long carried out.

We are happy to find from Mr. Whitworth, that less than an average year's subscriptions will make up the sum requisite for the lasting establishment of the 'Cot.'






THE CANDLES.

THE CANDLES.

By H. C. Andersen.

 HERE was a great wax candle, that was quite aware of its own merits. "I am wax by birth and moulded into form," it said. "I give more light and last longer than other candles, and my place is in a chandelier, or a silver candlestick."

"That must be a beautiful existence," said the tallow candle. "I am only tallow, and nothing but a dip; yet that, I console myself with thinking, is better than being a rushlight, which is only dipped twice. I had to be dipped eight times to attain my proper plumpness. I am quite contented. Of course it gives one a grander station and a gay life, to be wax by birth and not tallow; but one cannot choose one's own station in this world. You will go up into the great room, and I shall stay here in the kitchen; yet this is a good place, too—all the house gets its food out of it."

"But there is something of higher importance than food," said the wax candle; "and that is Society—to see it shine, and to shine oneself. There is a ball here to-night. I and all my family will soon be sent for."

The words were hardly spoken, when the wax candles were fetched. And the tallow candle was wanted, too; the mistress of the house took it up in her own delicate hand, and carried it into the kitchen. A little lad stood there with a basket. She filled it with potatoes and a few apples, and gave them all to the poor boy.

"And here is a candle for you, my little friend," said she. "Your mother sits working till late in the night, so this will be of some use to her."

The little daughter of the house was standing close by, and when she heard the words "late in the night," she burst out joyfully, "I shall be up late in the night, too. We are going to have a ball, and I shall wear the big red ribbons."

How her face glowed! It was joy itself. No wax candle could ever shine like the child's two eyes.

"A blessed sight!" thought the tallow candle; "I shall never forget it, and never see the like of it again, most certainly."

And now it was laid in the basket, under the lid; and the boy went away with it.

"What is to become of me now?" thought the dip. "I am going to poor people. I may not get even a brass candlestick, perhaps whilst the wax candle sits in silver, and sees the finest company! How delightful it must be to give light to fine company! But it was my lot to be born tallow, and not wax."

And the dip came to the poor people—a widow with three children in a low, narrow room, just opposite the rich house.

"God bless the good lady for what she has given," said the mother. "Why, here is a beautiful candle; it will last me quite late in the night."

And the candle was lighted.

"Foh!—faugh!" it said; "that was a nasty stifling match that shined lighted me with! Very different from what they would offer a wax candle in the rich house there!"

And there also the candles were lighted, and they shone across the street. Carriages rolled up with guests in fine ball-dresses, and the music sounded.

"Now they are beginning over there," thought the dip; and it remembered the rich little girl's glowing face, brighter than all the waxlights all together. "Such a sight," it went on thinking, "as I can never see again."

Just then the smallest child in the poor people's house came up—a little girl it was; she took brother and sister round the neck; she had something very important that must be told in a whisper.

"We are going to-night—only think—we are going to have hot potatoes!"

Her eyes glowed with delight. The candle shone straight in her face; and there it saw a joy and happiness as great as in the rich house opposite, where the little lady had said, "To-night we are going to have a ball, and I shall wear the big red ribbons."

"Is it just as great a treat, then, to get hot potatoes?" thought the dip. "The little ones here are just as much delighted:"—and it sneezed its approval* of the thought—that is to say, it sputtered, which is all that a tallow candle can do.

* If a Dane sneezes when telling anything, he will say, "I sneeze the truth of it, you see."

The table was spread: the potatoes were eaten. How nice they tasted!—it was quite a feast; and then each child had an apple for dessert, and the smallest one repeated the little verse:

“Again to thee, O God, I say
My thanks, for feeding me to-day.
Amen.”

“Was not that said nicely, mother?” she exclaimed in the same breath.

“You must not talk and ask questions like that,” said the mother; “you must only think of the good God who has fed you.”

The little ones were put to bed, and were kissed and asleep at once; whilst mother sat up sewing till late in the night, to earn a livelihood for herself and them. And still from the rich house opposite the lights shone and the music sounded. The stars glistened above all the houses—above the rich and above the poor ones, equally bright, equally blessed.


“This has really been a famous evening,” mused the dip. “I wonder whether the wax candles can have had a better one. That is the one thing I should like to know, before I am quite burned out.” And it thought of the two happy faces—the one lighted up by wax candles and the other by a dip candle.

Well—that is the whole story.

HEREWARD DAYRELL; OR, THE COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF.

CHAPTER V.

ALONE.

 HE two children left behind cried a good deal at first, for Manly's foot was very painful, and Geraint was bewildered and frightened. After a while, being tired out, they fell asleep, and slept through the heat of the day. Manly's foot was too painful for him to rest comfortably, and when Geraint woke, it was to find him moaning with pain, and calling piteously for “mamma.” Geraint sat for some time watching him with perplexed and pitying looks, but at last could not refrain from joining in the cry. “Mamma! Papa!

Hereward! come!" he screamed: there was no answer, and the child's voice grew weaker and fainter, except when a fresh groan from Manly frightened him into renewed vigour. At last, a distant "Cooeh" fell on their ears. Geraint started up and shouted again and again, "Papa, come!"

The "Cooeh" was repeated, and nearer; Geraint danced with eagerness, "Papa, papa!" There was another, and, after an interval, another, but much further off. "They are going away," moaned Manly. "Mamma, do come; I shall die; mamma, come!" Geraint threw his arms round Manly's neck: "No, Manly, no, you won't die; I will ask God not to let you die."

"Ask God to send papa," murmured Manly, faintly.

Geraint knelt down and clasped his little hands: "Pray God send papa soon, and don't let Manly die," he said.

There was another "Cooeh" much nearer; Geraint shrieked "Papa" again at the top of his voice, and this time there was an answer, a shout, "Hereward! Manly! Geraint! Where are you?"

"Here, papa," shouted back Geraint; "here, in the wood."

There was a breaking of boughs and a trampling of feet, then a sound of voices near at hand, and in a few minutes more Geraint was in his father's arms.

"Where was Hereward?" That was Colonel Dayrell's first question, after he had examined Manly's foot, and found the hurt to be only a severely sprained ankle. It was not easy to make out Geraint's confused story, and Manly was too much exhausted with pain to be able to throw much light upon it. "Hereward had sent papa," was all Geraint would say; but when Colonel Dayrell explained that he had not seen Hereward, Geraint's perplexity helped him to understand the state of the case. A short consultation was held by the explorers, and Colonel Dayrell determined to remain with some of the party, to continue the search for Hereward, who must, they felt sure, be still in the wood. Two of their number would carry Manly and Geraint to the place where they had left the carriage, and return in it to Wellington with them. The next day they would bring the carriage to the same place (to penetrate farther into the wood with it was impossible), and leaving it, again proceed to the spot in which they then were, where they would bring provisions and pitch a tent, making an encampment there until Colonel Dayrell or some of the party should join them.

As it was agreed, so they did; the exploring party continued their search, shouting at intervals, in hopes of being heard and answered by the missing boy. Manly and Geraint were carried home; Manly suffered terribly from the jolting to his foot, but he bore all bravely now; he was going to mamma, all would soon be well. Geraint, as he fell asleep with his head resting on his kind friend's shoulder, murmured softly to himself, "*God did send papa.*"

We must now return to Hereward. After he left his brothers he walked on bravely for some time, without at all doubting that, as he was certainly going down hill, he must be descending the mountain in the direction of Wellington. Nor was he staggered by a good deal of climbing and uphill scrambling that came in his way, for their course before had not been a continuous ascent. The trees were so thickly matted together and intertwined with creepers and low shrubs, that he could only make his way through them slowly, but nothing daunted him; he struggled on through the thickets, breaking down branches pushing, literally fighting his way, regardless that his clothes were being torn and his face scratched by the merciless bushes. After a while he was brought to a stand-still. At his feet—right in his path—was an immense chasm, too wide to jump across; while as to its depth, Hereward shuddered as he looked down into it. "I do not remember seeing this as we came," he said to himself; "we did not cross it, certainly; I wonder if I am going the right way." He considered a minute: "Perhaps we came below it; I will go on along this side which leads downwards; I daresay it will close up soon, and I shall be able to get over it, or if not, I am still going down, and I must come to the bottom some time, so it will be all right."

Hereward went on again, not heeding that his path became every moment steeper and rougher; but he was soon obliged to pause for a second time, for now the chasm on his left was joined by another on the right, and he was standing between the two on a narrow tongue of land, which soon ran on to a sharp point and was lost. What to do now had become a matter for very serious deliberation, and could not be decided in a moment. Hereward sat down, took out the buns which he had brought for his dinner, and ate them while he considered; then leaving the empty basket on the ground, he went to the edge of the chasm and looked over; branches and bushes grew in it. In another minute Hereward swung himself over the edge, on to a

narrow ledge of rock which ran along it for some distance. Along this Hereward crept, clinging to the bushes, then suddenly sprang from it on to a huge sharp rock, which reared itself right in the middle of the gully. From this he leapt across to the other side. It was further than he expected; he missed his footing, and would have fallen, but his crimson silk scarf, which he always wore across one shoulder in his rôle of commander-in-chief, caught in the bushes and held him fast, while he struggled on to firm ground. So firmly was it caught that he was held as in a vice, and in order to free himself he was obliged to leave a great part of it hanging in the bushes. His hat, too, fell from his head into the chasm, but he did not trouble himself to look after it. He thought it must be getting late, and he wanted to push on, for he was anxious about his brothers; and besides, as he went on he was surprised to find that he did not reach the cleared track by which they had entered the wood. He was getting very tired, and a little doubt arose in his mind as to whether he was really in the right way. He threw himself down to rest and think; and being completely wearied out, he fell asleep. When he woke it was quite dark; he could not see anything; night had come on.

A great horror seized on Hereward as he thought of Manly and Geraint, left alone, as he believed, all night upon the mountain, and watching for him to come back and bring them help. What would become of them? Manly was hurt, but how much hurt he did not know; he might faint again, and then what could Geraint do? How terrified he would be, poor little fellow! Or Manly might die from neglect. Hereward shuddered all over, and buried his face in his hands, trying to shut out the terrible thought that it was all his fault. The others would never have attempted the expedition but for him; he was answerable for it all. If he had only taken Alan's advice, and spoken to mamma: it was all his wilfulness which had brought them to this terrible state. The thought drove Hereward nearly wild; he could not keep still, he must go back to his brothers. He forgot the terrible chasm; he could find his way back to them even in the dark, he thought. At any rate he must try; he must go; he could not leave them alone any longer. Hereward started up, his head came violently into collision with a tree, and he fell on the ground—stunned.

When Hereward came to his senses it was again day: at first he felt stunned and confused, and could not make out why he was lying there,

but gradually recollection came back to him : when he tried to sit up he was tired and stiff, his head ached, and he was almost inclined to lie down and go to sleep again, but at the thought of his little brothers he roused himself, and determined to make his way back to them, for it was very clear to him now that he was not in the direct way to Wellington. He started up with this intention, but could not remember which way he ought to turn, or from what direction he had come to the place in which he then was. Certainly his brothers were on higher ground than he was, for he had come downhill nearly all the way yesterday. Then, surely, argued he, he must be nearly at the foot of the mountain, and if so, not very far from Wellington ; would it not, therefore, be better to go on ?

Hereward acted on this idea, and continued to descend, unconscious that each step was taking him farther both from home and from help, and quite satisfied to find that the trees grow further apart, and the ground became less rough and broken, and was in many places quite wet.

Suddenly a gap in the trees showed Hereward an open space not far off, and directly in front of him. Were his wanderings over ? He gave a great bound for joy and relief, and pushing on towards it, in a few minutes found himself standing on the borders of an immense marshy lake. Hereward could now see plainly where he was, without any impeding bushes, but the sight renewed his despair. In front of him, and on either side, lay extended the great swamp, surrounded by high mountains which rose abruptly from it, and were covered with trees down to its very brink. Between their peaks were seen other mountain tops, further and further off, till they vanished in the distance. Light clouds of white mist floated low down upon the sides of the mountains, and seemed to brood upon the surface of the lake. Here and there the sun caught the spray of a distant waterfall as it dashed down to lose itself in the lake, and lighted it up with a thousand beautiful colours. Over all was spread the canopy of the bright blue cloudless sky, and the brilliant rays of the sun beat down pitilessly on Hereward's uncovered head.

Hereward looked in vain for some opening which could give him a chance of escaping towards home. All around him there was none, and behind him was the forest. No wonder that his heart sank to find himself all alone in that vast solitude ; it might have appalled a much older person.

Hereward stood gazing on the scene for some moments, overwhelmed by the sense of his loneliness, but stillness was not natural to him, his impulse was always to *act* in some way; and after a little consideration he decided on re-entering the forest behind him, and endeavouring to reach some high point from which he might manage to see his way. It was much harder to climb up the mountain than to come down it, and perhaps Hereward had unconsciously taken a steeper path. His difficulties increased every moment, not being caused so much now by the obstructions of the bushes as by the roughness of his path, which, being full of sharp points of rock, cut his boots to pieces and wounded his feet. Often he had to turn out of his way, because some huge rock which he could not climb rose directly in his path, and oftener still he was forced to stop and rest, for he had had no food all day, and was becoming exhausted. The beautiful mountain springs afforded him many a refreshing draught of water, and though he had almost given up the hope of either finding his brothers or returning to Wellington, he wandered on, simply because he could not keep still.

When it grew dark, Hereward lay down under a rock to sleep, and woke in the morning to find himself wet and wretched, for a heavy mist was rising from the lake: as the sun grew hotter the mist cleared, and he went on his way again, though hardly able to move from weariness and hunger. In the course of his wandering he came upon a cleared space, and hope rose again in his breast. Some one had lived here once: there had been a hut, but it was now burnt down; and a garden, now neglected and overgrown; still something fit for food might be found in it. Hereward searched eagerly in the vain hope of finding some potatoes. There were none, but in one corner grew a patch of onions. He took out his knife and began digging with it; the ground was hard, and it broke in half; he grubbed on, however, with the broken stump, and succeeded in getting up a huge overgrown onion. So strong was it that it blistered his mouth, and brought the tears into his eyes, but a famished boy will eat anything. Hereward finished his dinner, and set out again on his wandering, but soon the onion showed its effects upon him; he became so sleepy that he could hardly hold up his head, and after staggering on for a few paces, he finally sank upon the ground in a deep slumber.

CHAPTER VI.

THE SEARCH.

WE must now leave Hereward for a little while, and follow the fortunes of his father and the others engaged in the search for him. The only real information that Manly and Geraint could give their father about him was that he "had gone *down* the mountain,"—"to Wellington," they added; but in this they were clearly wrong, for Colonel Dayrell's party had already well searched all that side of the mountain during their ascent. Hereward must, therefore, have turned out of the way on one side or the other; but there was nothing to help them to determine on which side he had erred. The party, consisting of nine, agreed therefore to separate. Colonel Dayrell, with three friends, went in one direction, the five others took a different route. The place in which they had found the boys was to be the rendezvous, as there seemed a remote chance that Hereward might return there: to that place they would send from time to time messages to one another as to their success: so they parted; they scoured the woods all around them, but found not the least trace of Hereward till night descended upon them, and the darkness compelled them to give up the search.

When the daylight again appeared the exploring party renewed their efforts, but not till nearly mid-day did a ray of hope dawn upon them. Colonel Dayrell noticed a bough of one of the bushes hanging loose, and appearing to have been recently broken: possibly Hereward might have broken it in passing. Slight as was the foundation for this hope, they were encouraged by it, and pushed on the more vigorously, but soon stopped short again, for there was another sign—a small gilt button with an anchor upon it, lying in a crack in the rock. Hereward's knickerbockers were trimmed with buttons of this pattern; surely now they were in the right track.

Forward they pressed, searching carefully as they went, and shouting from one to another till the wood, usually so silent, rang with the sound of voices, and made the stillness which followed when they stood motionless, straining every sense in the eager listening for an answer, more intense and more awful. But their hearts beat high with hope, until suddenly before them, as before Hereward on the previous day, burst the awful chasm. "It is impossible that the boy could have

crossed this," exclaimed one of them, breaking the terrible silence in which all stood gazing at the abyss.

"There may be a way across it lower down," returned Colonel Dayrell, almost sharply; "see, is not that another button?" It was only a bright pebble, but soon a more unmistakable sign met their eyes—Hereward's empty luncheon-basket, which he had deserted before taking his desperate leap. There was no longer any doubt that they were on Hereward's traces, and one of the party returned instantly to the rendezvous with the news.

Colonel Dayrell stepped to the edge of the chasm and looked carefully up and down it. What was it that made him start back with a cry of dismay—a sharp bitter cry of grief and horror—"O, Hereward, Hereward, my boy, my boy!" There, caught on the bushes at the opposite side of the opening, was Hereward's crimson scarf, and lower down, deep in the chasm, hung his hat upon a point of rock. All stood gazing fearfully down into the cleft, but no more signs were to be seen.

"He must have tried to leap across," said Mr. Carey, and his voice, though lowered, sounded strange and startling as it broke the solemn stillness.

"Impossible," replied Captain Martyn, glancing at Colonel Dayrell, and speaking under his breath.

"But I say he must have *tried* to do so," returned his companion, "for see, his scarf is on the *opposite* side."

Colonel Dayrell paid no heed to this short discussion; he was standing perfectly still, with his eyes fixed intently on the opposite bank. Presently he moved back a few paces, then ran suddenly forward, leapt right across the gully to the other side, stooped down for a minute as if to examine something on the ground, and then shouting, "There are more marks here; follow me," he disappeared among the bushes.

Captain Martyn and Mr. Carey stood looking after him for some moments, till Mr. Carey turned to his companion with a look of such utter dismay and perplexity, that in one of those sudden revulsions of feeling which often follow upon a state of great tension, he could not refrain from bursting into a hearty fit of laughter. Mr. Carey joined in the laugh at first, but soon broke off. "Well, what is to be done now?" said he; "we must follow him."

"Follow him?" echoed Captain Martyn; "can you jump that, Carey?"

Mr. Carey shook his head; indeed the chasm was much too wide for any but a desperate man to leap. On examination, however, the friends discovered the way in which Hereward must have crossed it—by means of the ledge and jutting rock. Even that looked formidable, and they hesitated to attempt it in the now uncertain light. "We must wait," they said, "till morning; some better way may suggest itself then."

Meanwhile, Colonel Dayrell, never pausing to look for his friends, pushed on in an agony of terrible excitement, not daring to think of his fear that the traces he fancied he had seen, might be only the effect of an overwrought imagination, until darkness overtook him on the shores of the great lake. His further progress was barred, and which way should he turn? His anxiety would not let him rest. If from fatigue he dozed for a moment, the next he started up awakened by a terrible vision of the chasm and Hereward lying at the bottom, sometimes still and motionless, sometimes calling to him for help. The cry sounded so real that many a time he answered it, and was almost driven to despair by the dreadful stillness which was all his answer. Wild thoughts chased one another through his troubled brain, and among them the idea that, in his mad haste, he might have gone too far—perhaps have passed within a few yards of his boy; or even now he might be sleeping by his side—the lake must have stopped him. Oh, that the terrible darkness would pass away that he might see if this were indeed so! Never before had Colonel Dayrell so longed and prayed for the morning.

The sun rose at last, glorious and beautiful; calling up a mist from the lake and tinting it with the glorious hues of the rainbow; but the scene had no attraction for Colonel Dayrell, his whole attention was concentrated on some little footprints which met his eyes on the damp ground; by them he could trace Hereward's wanderings: he saw how he had descended the mountain, the place in which he had stood undecided, and marked how he had turned and begun his second ascent. He followed the steps eagerly as he climbed up the rock, and his heart ached as he noticed how the traces were often marked in blood, till he, too, reached the clearing where the little hut had once stood. There he met Captain Martyn and Mr. Carey, who had crossed the

ravine by the aid of a fallen tree, at a point some way above the place at which he had left them, and had reached the clearing by a direct route: when Colonel Dayrell found them, they were looking at the freshly turned mould in the corner from which Hereward had dug up his onion. Something on the ground shone brightly; Colonel Dayrell stooped down, and picked up the broken blade of Hereward's knife. "H. D." was scratched upon it. "See," he said, "he cannot be far off, he must have been here this morning; if this had lain here all night *the mist would have rusted it.*" A few more steps brought the searchers to the place where Hereward lay upon the ground, fast asleep.

I shall not attempt to describe Colonel Dayrell's emotions when his boy was thus restored to him; outwardly he was calm and quiet, concentrating all his energies in considering the easiest manner of reassembling the searching party, and reaching home again, while Hereward himself was too much bewildered and exhausted to feel anything but a vague sense of relief; so also, when he was brought home, Mrs. Dayrell's joy and thankfulness at receiving him from her husband's arms were too deep for any outward expression. Hereward's reception at home was not at all what he had fancied it would be, in his romancings with Manly before they set out. He did not think at all about being considered a hero, nor did he feel much like one. Only it seemed very nice to have his poor bruised feet bathed, and to go to sleep in his own little bed again, with mamma's dear face bending over him; and as he felt her hot tears fall upon his cheek, and listened to her half-uttered words of thankfulness, he whispered, "I did not think you would mind quite so much, dear mamma, or *indeed* I would not have gone."

And now, having finished the story of this adventure, I think that we must take our leave of the little Dayrells. Alan's eye and Manly's foot both got well in course of time, and the boys returned to their games on the quay with as much ardour as before; but though Hereward still retained his post of commander-in-chief, and his spirit of adventure was not much daunted by his experience on the mountain, he had learnt some lessons of consideration and obedience; and when Alan demurred to his daring schemes, would answer, "Well, we will ask papa or mamma, and then, if they give leave, it will be all right."

ENDGYTH.

THE END OF THE YEAR.



O-DAY must be a solemn day,
 At least to me—at least to me:
 Let others hail it as they may,
 I have but little heart for glee.

To-day through its appointed weeks
 This seedtime year has surely run,
 And sadly from its silence speaks
 The voice of all I've left undone.

A year of life's most precious hours,
 And lent to me in vain, in vain—
 Would that remorse's bitterest showers
 Could give me back this year again!

Youth is the time to gather strength
 For all that waits devoted man,
 And age, throughout its ripening length,
 Can but fulfil what youth began.

Youth is the time to take our stand,
 And choose for heaven or the world;
 Once past that mystic boundary-land,
 New standards seldom are unfurl'd.

The year is gone. O golden year,
 Frittered away with childish toys!
 Canst thou not count one holy tear?
 Must nought survive of all thy joys?

Yes! One thing surely I have won,
 One truth the months to me have shown;
 I've seen how much there may be done
 By him whom duty rules alone.

The way is plain. Through future years
 O may I tread it unbeguil'd!
 What though it oft be wet with tears,
 If God's own light have on it smiled?

M. M. M.

Christmas Song, 1871.

Words by L.L.B.

Music by ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

Cold breaks the Christ-mas dawn, Deep snows are fall-ing;

While on the fro-zen lawn Voi-ces are call-ing, A -

CHORUS.

wake! a - wake! Peace and good-will to all,

Each one is sing - ing; Good - will and peace to all,

Church bells are ring - ing; A - wake! A - wake!

2

All meet to-day, but some,
 Alas! are sleeping;
 And in another home
 Christmas are keeping.
 Asleep, asleep.

CHORUS.

Peace and goodwill to all,
 Angels are bringing;
 Goodwill and peace to all,
 Hark! they are singing.
 Awake! awake!

THE BARMECIDE: A MUDDLE,

FOUNDED ON THE STORIES OF THE BARBER'S BROTHERS IN THE ARABIAN NIGHTS,

MADE BY

S. H. GATTY.

Dramatis Personæ.

SHACABAC, son of a Baghdad merchant lately deceased. Supposed to have been rather dyspeptic in disposition, and not altogether master of his wife.

{ ALNASCHAR, his brother, more energetic in disposition, but a victim to a monomania. He eventually rises to distinction, and revives an old family in the person of

The BARMECIDE, a very affable person.

BEGGAR OF BAGHDAD No. I., a great rogue.

DITTO No. II., a greater rogue.

DITTO No. III., a very great rogue.

INA, Alnaschar's wife.

MYRA, Shacabac's wife, a rather *severe* person.

Black slaves, guests, musicians, &c.

Costume.

SHACABAC should be "made up" to look rather miserable; dark lines under his eyes and a drooping expression about the mouth. Turban and loose "Bloomers," any colour. ALNASCHAR should carry himself as if he was fully aware of his own importance. Eastern costume. The BARMECIDE should be made up as a very great "swell," long white beard and moustachios. A very pompous person, but affable, and capable of taking a joke. The BEGGARS OF BAGHDAD should present a very sordid and tattered appearance outside, but be capable of throwing off their old clothes to discover brilliant attire underneath. This may be managed by a system of cloaks. INA and MYRA should in the first scenes be rather humbly attired, but be gorgeously appraised at the feast.

SCENE I.

High Street, Baghdad. Shops. Fruit-stall, &c. Entrances R. and L. ALNASCHAR and INA discovered standing in the street. ALNASCHAR showing his wife his father's will, which he holds in his hand. ALNASCHAR during this scene should modify his voice, changing rapidly to a very stagey enunciation at the words printed in Italics.

INA. My dear Alnaschar, what a piece of luck!
 I never thought your father such a duck
 As to his naughty little son to leave
 A hundred golden pieces. I can't grieve
 The poor old man's decease; and rather fear
 I much prefer his money to—

ALNAS.

My dear,

They say, *good fortune never cometh single*.
 I've got some news to make your earrings tingle.
 And first I'll say, *as life's an empty bubble*,
 I'm thankful the old man's now free from trouble.
 Now for my news, My dear, *the world's a stage*,
And man—

INA.

Pray cease that canting, or my rage

Will know no bounds. Go on at once, I pray.

ALNAS.

Man's but a player, I was going to say,
 If but to clear my throat you'd given me space.
 Now tell me, wife, d'y'e think I've got the face
 Of a night-black tragedian? Does *your soul*
Shrink to its inmost depths when my eyes roll,
 And I exclaim, in a deep voice of thunder,
Alnaschar murders—(ah, dear me! a blunder.
 I wonder what the poet says I killed?
 However, it's no matter)—Are you filled
 With terror at (imagine ghosts and shrieks.
 This is a line I've studied now for weeks).
Blow bugle, blow, blow wind,

INA.

And crack his cheeks.

Have you turned actor, Alnaschar?

ALNAS.

My news,

Fair Ina, you have guessed. You've got to choose
 What part you'll take. Already I have ordered
 The carpenter to build a van all bordered
 With gilt and curtains; 'tis to be our stage.
 Then some companion actors we'll engage;
 In fact, our theatre will become the rage.
 And so, by *means* of this our little *means*,
 We'll change to heroes, lovers, kings, and queens.

[*Loud chord on piano behind scenes.*]

Song.

TUNE—"Laughing Chorus," Offenbach.

ALNAS. [*sings.*]

Oh, my life, this really is amusing,
 With a hundred pieces in your purse,
 A lively occupation to be choosing,
 And one that's also likely to imbure.

[*Together.*]

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Who'd have ever thought of our setting up a stage.

Ha! ha! ha! Alnaschar,

Who'd have ever thought of our setting up a stage!

INA [*sings.*]

Deary me, Alnaschar! who'd have thought it!

Yet I have no doubt that you are right.

La! a theatre! and so you've really bought it!

Oh may we not begin this very night?

[*Together.*]

Ha! ha! ha! ha! ha! ha!

Who'd have ever thought of our setting up a stage!

(Bis.)

G 2

INA. Well, really, husband, this a piece of news is,
I'd no idea you went in for the Muses.
But are you sure that you can act?

ALNAS. What! I!
Where is my rival? let him come and try
To cut me out; I'm equal to Othello,

[*At this moment enter 3rd BEGGAR of BAGHDAD, apparently blind, and singing "We are beggars struck with blindness, &c.," from Chorus "CARNOVALE" [published by NOVELLO]; he crosses stage behind ALNASCHAR and INA.*]

Hamlet, or anything [*pointing to BEGGAR*]. You see that fellow?
To prove to you I'm *au fait* in the art
I'll feign to be a blind man, too. The part
Consists in—well, as follows. Now, here goes.

[*Imitating voice of BEGGAR, and striking his stick in front of him.*]

Pity the poor blind man, and mind your toes.

[*Goes up to BEGGAR, and they begin to talk in undertones, while INA sings.*]

Song.

"What will the folk of Baghdad say?"

TUNE.—"The Shooting-man," in "Songs of a Grandfather," Boosey's Musical Cabinet.

INA [*sings.*] What will the folk of Baghdad say?
They'll think Alnaschar mad,
That I'm almost a lunatic,
Or something quite as bad.
They'll wonder at our novel way
Of earning our bread,
And say his hundred pieces must
Have turned Alnaschar's head.

ALNAS. [*sings.*] No, this is what they're sure to say:
They'll say I'm very wise,
That no man makes a fortune but
The man who really tries
To seize on any wild idea
That in his brain may float,
And to cram it, cram it, cram it,
Cram it down the public throat.

INA. Imagine me a heroine or
Even a princess,
A stately Cleopatra now,
And then a grande duchesse.
Perhaps I'll lead a ballet, or
Surrounded by my lords,
I'll trip it, trip it, trip it, as
An empress on the boards.

ALNAS. In Europe plays are all the go,
And it seems rather queer

The fashion's not reached Baghdad—
 But it's sure to come next year.
 The market we'll anticipate
 And be first in the field,
 And never, never, never to
 Their Keans or Kembles yield.

[*Together.*] And so we'll say it's quite the thing,
 And only rather queer
 That the fashion's not reached Baghdad.
 [*&c., same as last verse.*]

ALNAS. [*to BEGGAR, aside.*] I'll not forget—the South Arcade you said?

BEGGAR. Ten o'clock sharp, when all the world's in bed.
 [*Exeunt ALNASCHAB and INA B., BEGGAR L.*]

[*Enter MYRA, with marketing basket on her arm. Stops as if waiting for some one.*]

MYRA. Well, thank my stars my marketing is done,
 This [*pointing to basket*] comes of marrying a merchant's son.
 My father-in-law is very ill, I fear.
 I told my husband, now, to meet me here
 And tell me all the news. 'Tis well for him
 I've not a stick. He'd smart in every limb.

[*Enter SHACABAC, with basket of glass behind him.*]

SHAC. I say, the poor old gentleman's deceased.
 MYRA. Well, and his will?

SHAC. My fortune is increased
 By the large sum of just one hundred pieces.
 Thus sound folk profit by their friends' diseases.

MYRA. Well, Shacabac, and have you got the money?

SHAC. Ah! yes! that is to say, you see, my honey,
 I have invested it. There are not many
 Who know so well to turn an honest penny.
 MYRA. Out with it quick! what errand have you been on?
 SHAC. Don't get excited, or you'll lose your chignon.
 MYRA. Shabby, I'm waiting.

SHAC. Well then, Myra dear,
 The produce of my legacy is here.

[*Produces from behind him a basket of glass. N.B., a handkerchief may be thrown over a basket, leaving its contents undefined to the audience. A few broken pieces of crockery (common in most houses) will be all sufficient for stage purposes.*]

MYRA [*clapping her hands.*] Well! of your follies this does all surpass!

A hundred pieces upon brittle glass!
 And is this all a merchant's son can bring
 Of fortune to his wife? A pretty thing,
 Indeed, for a great Baghdad Cadi's daughter:
 I'm something like a fish that's out of water.
 Now pray don't be so angry; it may seem
 A little rash at first; but hear my scheme.
 This morning I was by my father's gate,
 Musing and pondering on my future fate,

SHAC.

When suddenly came panting down the street
 A shopman in a hurry. By my feet
 He put this basket down, and thus did speak.
 "How does your honour? are you going next week
 To the great Caliph's feast? the Sultan's court,
 They say, is coming, and the Caliph's bought
 All the provisions he could lay his hand on—
 Tents, decorations, everything in short;
 The people are their houses to abandon
 To make room for the Sultan and his court."
 "Ah! is it so?" said I; "if I may ask it,
 Would you mind saying what is in your basket?"
 "Ah! there I've got a treasure that surpasses.
 Within that basket lie some favourite glasses
 Used by the Sultan on the last occasion.
 If to the Caliph I can use persuasion,
 And sell them for the feast week, well is me,
 I shall no longer then be "up a tree."
 "Sell them," said I.—No sooner said than done:
 The glass is here, my hundred pieces gone.

[During SHACABAC's recital MYRA should seem very impatient, at first tapping her foot on the ground. But as the scheme is divulged she must get more interested and look more pleased.]

MYRA. Oh! Shacabac, perhaps then you've done well?
 SHAC. Yes!

Of course I have, the glass I mean to sell.
 MYRA. Yes!
 SHAC. For just two hundred pieces, and with that
 MYRA. Yes!
 SHAC. I mean to buy more glass; sell that again.
 MYRA. Yes!
 SHAC. Thus to a merchant's income I'll attain.
 MYRA. Yes!
 SHAC. Trade in
 MYRA. Pearls?
 SHAC. Stuffs and merchandize until
 I can a palace with my profits fill.
 Then I'll have
 MYRA. Slaves and gardens?
 SHAC. Horses, men.
 MYRA. Flowers and jewels, dear?
 SHAC. Enough for ten.
 Baths,
 MYRA. Silks and satins?
 SHAC. Beautiful attendants,
 My palace be a mass of great resplendence.
 Then won't I strut and hold my head in air! [Suits action to word.
 Approaches basket unconsciously.]
 I'll be the Caliph!

MYRA. Shacabac!!! Ah!

[SHACABAC walks into the basket.]

SHAC.

There!

* * * * * [Pause.] * * * *

MYRA, I've smashed the glass; we're ruined!

MYRA.

Oh dear!

Where shall we go? whatever shall we do, dear!

Duet. TUNE—"John Anderson my Joe."

ALNAB. [sings.]

Oh why did we indulge in just now such exultation?
 And why did you require, wife, such lengthy explanation?
 Oh why did you excite me
 So carelessly to tread?
 It surely can't have been my fault
 That we've got to beg our bread.

MYRA [sings.]

A pretty thing for you, sir, to lay the blame on me;
 I'll thank you not to do so, d'ye think I cannot see?
 Why, if I had my own way,
 I'd like to break your head.
 'Twas you that kicked it down, and now
 We must go and beg our bread.

[Curtain falls on them weeping.]

SCENE II.

An upper chamber in Baghdad. Round the room are four divans. Elaborate Eastern furniture. Long pipes, coffee, &c.: behind one of the divans a box concealed.

[Enter the three BAGHDAD BEGGARS, in their old cloaks, one of them bringing ALNASCHAR. They are blindfolded, or pretend to be blind. They feel their way to the divans. ALNASCHAR does the same, keeping his eyes shut. They sit down on the divans in silence.]

1st BEGGAR. Brothers! the sun is set, pray give attention,
 For from our rule we suffer no declension.
 The sun being set, our settling time arrives.
 As when the sun is high each of us strives
 To gather golden pieces for the rest,
 So when it sets, and each has done his best,
 We meet in conclave to discuss the day,
 And all our earnings to the treasury pay.
 But first, before we open any locks,
 Make sure that no man our secret mocks.
 Is the room clear?

2nd BEGGAR [seizing ALNAB.] Here is a stranger man.

1st B. [to A.] Give me the pass-word, sirrah, if you can.

3rd BEGGAR. Wandering to-day in easterly direction,
 I found this candidate for your election;
 Stricken as we are, blind as any bat,
 He wants to join our party.

1st B.

Let the cat

Out of the bag. He may our secret share,
 If to make fair division he will swear.

Brothers, the pass-word now proceed to teach.
Backshish! Backshish!

2nd B.

Backshish!

3rd B.

Backshish!

ALNAS.

Backshish!

[They throw off their cloaks and appear in gorgeous costume. Take the bandages from their eyes, which all open except ALNASCHAR, who still pretends to be blind, keeping his eyes shut. They proceed to light pipes and smoke, and drink coffee.]

1st B.

Brothers, to business! what's your luck to-day?
Relate your fortunes, and your profits pay.

2nd B.

Brother, I wandered far into the south
With plaintive words of pegging in my mouth,
I met a Cadi, but he would not listen,
So, quick as thought, I came to a decision,
And chalked upon his doorpost our sign:
"Brothers, take heed, the Cadi's a lean kine."
Then, precious time in loitering not to pass,
I bargained in the market for some glass,
And taking off the bandage from my eyes
I looked about to catch another prize.
Soon in the street, at a rich merchant's gate,
I met a purchaser, in frantic state.
His father had just left him in his will
A hundred pieces, so he said: to kill
This piece of game I then made no delay.
"So, will the Cadi buy my glass to-day?"
No sooner said than done. He took the lot,
And here's his hundred pieces for our pot. *[Gives purse to 1st B.]*
1st B. Good, brother, good. And I have not done badly;
The Baghdad wits want sharpening up sadly.
I, like yourself, found blind-man's-buff no use,
So wandered towards the market on the loose.
"Wood! wood!" I cried. "Ships, houses, I can build.
Who's for a carpenter?" I'd nearly killed
My voice with shouting, when a man
Frantic addressed me: "Can you build a van? *[AL. starts.]*
I want it gilded, curtained, for a stage:
A hundred pieces for it." I engage
To do your pleasure, Cadi, but I pray
The price beforehand of the van you'll pay.
No sooner said than done. I took the lot,
And here's his hundred pieces for our pot. *[Produces purse.]*

[They all pour out coffee, laugh, and begin to sing song, as follows.]

Song.

"Blind Little Baghdad Boys."

TUNE—"Ten Little Niggers"

1st B. *[sings.]*

One little beggar thought he would be blind,
Started on his travels and left the rest behind,

Met with a Cadi, but found he wouldn't bite,
Marked the Cadi's doorpost, and left him in a fright.

Chorus.

1st B.	One little,			
2nd B.		Two little,		
3rd B.			Three little,	
ALNAS.				Four little,
ALL.	Blind little Baghdad boys.			
ALNAS.	Four little,			
3rd B.		Three little,		
2nd B.			Two little,	
1st B.				One little,
ALL.	Blind little Baghdad boy.			

2nd B. [*sings.*] Another little beggar thought he would be blind,
Started on his travels and left the rest behind,
Found that his blindness didn't raise a jot,
Turned carpenter and brought a hundred pieces to our pot.

[*Chorus, as before.*]

3rd B. [*sings.*] Another little beggar thought he would be blind,
Started on his travels and left the rest behind,
Met with a blind boy and made a proselyte—
This is the fourth boy that's with us here to-night.

[*Chorus, as before.*]

[*The BEGGARS chuckling, repeat chorus vaguely, as they drop off to sleep. While they sing the curtain falls. The stage is darkened and curtain rises again, discovering all the BEGGARS asleep on their divans, and ALNASCHAB sitting up on his. He looks round craftily, and speaks in an undertone.*]

ALNAS. So then I've come upon a den of thieves.
Humph! this is pleasant. Now, without their leaves,
I'll do so much as venture to remove
Some of their stolen wealth. These fellows' love
For getting coin from charitable folk
Has made them stupid as pigs in a poke;
Their wits seem dulled; they really did not see
In this blind beggar who has joined their spree
The very man from whom they got their gold.
So much the better. Now I'll make so bold
As to play them a trick. They'll find my wits
Equal to theirs; I'll send them into fits
Of fright. When they awake they'll find a Tartar.
Stay though, they must not hear what I am arter.
[*Gets up.*] Now to discover that box of bird-lime
With which, my friend informed me, every time
They sham their blindness each one smears his eyes.

[*Searches and finds it by one of BEGGARS.*]

Ah! here it is; now for my work. A prize

Of this sort does not meet one every day.

[*Smears 1st BEGGAR's eyes, and then the others.*]

There, you're all safe. Now for the rest. Hurrah!

Now for my stick. [*Gets it from corner.*] And now to beat the knaves.
I'll leave the rascals next door to their graves.

ALNAS. [*Imitates voice of some one outside door.*]

Open the door there, in the Caliph's name!

[*Aside.*] [No one's outside, but that is all the same
To these old sleepy thieves.] Open, I say!

The Caliph has proclaimed this very day

You thieving rascals all shall be put down.

Give up your spoils. Yourself must leave the town!

Get up, ye knaves! let each one hold his tongue,

(Such are the Caliph's orders,) or be hung.

[ALNAS. *rattles the door and falls upon the BEGGARS, beating them: they rise in great trepidation, thinking the police are upon them.*]

1st B. Pardon, great Cadi! see, you are mistaken!

We are but poor blind beggars.

ALNAS. Save your bacon

Quick, if you can; get out, you whining hound.

[*Exit B.*]

2nd B. Let me escape, great Cadi, I'll be bound

To pay the Caliph seventeen hundred pieces;

A little fortune, made from Llama fleeces.

ALNAS. Out with this money you have made by *fleeing*,

The Caliph p'raps will then withhold his teasing.

[*2nd B. gives A. a purse, and exit.*]

Ha! not so bad! [*to 3rd B.*] and what have you to give?

3rd B. Most mighty Cadi, grant that I may live,

And a most priceless treasure I'll reveal.

Here is a box made fast with lock and seal. [*Gives him a small casket.*]

In it a key of silver, that unlocks,

Concealed behind that bed, a massive box:

It is the Treasury of the Baghdad thieves.

Open and see it! he who sees believes.

ALNAS. Ha! not so bad! give me the key and go,

And thank your stars you've 'scaped without a blow.

Humph! This is well. Alnaschar cannot grumble.

[*Exit B.*]

Here's a big fortune into which to *tumble*.

Often I've thought in tragedy to shine,

But more adapted for the *tumbling* line,

I'll take to circus work, and clowning—no,

I'm not funny, so that wouldn't do.

[*Clock strikes.*] Halloo! past midnight! surely in the street,

My fair wife, Ina, promised me to meet.

I'll look about, for if the coast is clear,

She might as well her husband join up here.

[*Goes to window and whistles.*]

Ina, my fair one, Ina, come upstairs.

[*Enter INA.*] Ha! ha! my little 'un, banish all your cares;

I said good fortune never cometh single,
Shake you big box, and hear the trinkets jingle.
Oh my !

INA.
ALNAS.

Well, what ?

INA.

Oh ! what a piece of luck.

Alnaschar, I declare you *are* a duck.

[INA searches box, while ALNASCHAR lights the lamps again.]

Rubies, pearls, emeralds, diamonds, and gold,
If only this great boxful can be sold,
We shall be able to build a great palace !

ALNAS.

Give me the stage. To palaces I'm callous.

INA.

But tell me how you got at all this treasure ?

ALNAS.

Too long a story : wait till I have leisure.

Suffice to say, 'twas meant for poor and needy

Persons, and falling into hands but seedy,

Has not been honestly applied ; but I,

From it, with theatres Baghdad will supply.

INA.

Husband, a thought has struck me, do you know ;

I heard a story, many years ago,

Of a great family, greatest in the land,

Brahmins they were, who rose to great estate,

And made the Caliph jealous : so his hand

He raised, and vowed he would them extirpate.

And so decayed their greatness, but the means

By which they learnt to rival kings and queens—

By which, in fact, they gained their mighty power—

I thought that we might copy, and that our

New-gotten wealth might so be well laid out.

First they built palaces, and made a law,

That every eve at sunset slaves should shout,

North, East, and West, "Come to the open door

We Barmecides keep ever for the poor."

In flocked the poor, and travellers to rest,

And taste the bounty ready for each guest.

And so the Barmecides from day to day

Sent poor and weary happy on their way.

This money, here, would so be well applied,

And to each person you might give beside

Some lesson in your histrionic art,

Acting yourself, to each, a different part.

ALNAS.

Wise little wife ! you shall my counsels guide.

You for my teacher, I'll turn BARMECIDE.

Song.

"I'll be a Barmecide."

TUNE—"Gaily the Troubadour."

INA [*sings.*] Won't you be a Barmecide, Alnaschar dear ?
To us 'twill show the balmy side of life, that is clear.

Be then a Barmecide, you'll find it fun ;
A Barmecide, a Barmecide ; my ! what a gun.

Repeat together two last lines $\left. \begin{array}{l} \text{You'll} \\ \text{I'll} \end{array} \right\}$ be a Barmecide, won't it be fun ?

Barmecide, Barmecide, $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{you're} \\ \text{I'm} \end{array} \right\}$ a great gun.

ALNAS. Of course I'll be a Barmecide, such seems my fate,
And as you say, 'taint suicide to be in such estate.
I'll be a Barmecide, I'll have some fun ;
Barmecide, Barmecide, Ho ! I'm a gun !

[*Duo as before.*]

INA. While you are a Barmecide of course you'll have a dinner-
Party every night, decidedly, you'll not get thinner.
You'll be a Barmecide, what a jolly fact !
Invite your guests and fill their [*hesitation*] chests,
And show them how to act.

[*Duo as before.*]

ALNAS. Who wouldn't be a Barmecide, and live a jolly life,
Especially when by my side I've you, dear, for my wife ?
I'll be a Barmecide, won't it be fun ?
Barmecide, Barmecide, I'm a great gun !

[*Duo as before.*]

Curtain.

An interval of fifteen years is supposed now to elapse.

SCENE III.

The great hall of the BARMECIDE's Palace. Divans round. Gorgeous mats and Eastern decoration.

[*Enter SHACABAO and his wife, dressed as beggars, looking very miserable, and as if they knew they had no business where they were.*]

SHAC. Really the world is growing very hard.
Look at this wealth, and still we are debarred
From getting e'en a comfortable dinner.
Myra, my dear, I'm sure I'm getting thinner.
What is the use of Gladstone and his party,
If they can't keep poor people hale and hearty ?
Give me good food, warm clothing, boots and clogs,
That's what we want—throw theories to the dogs.
To night, however, so I won't complain,
I hope to put my old flesh on again.

MYRA. 'Tis very well for you to be so cheery,
But I am not so happy quite, my deary.
The Barmecides ask only men to dine,
So while you're feasting I outside must pine.
[*Sighing.*] Really these days ! they're black enough for nights !
Why don't they give us women our rights ?

SHAC. Well, well, I'll dine, then join you like a rocket.
 MYRA. Yes, with, remember! something in your pocket.

[Trumpet outside.]

SHAC. Come, let's be off, they're coming, and I fear
 They'll not invite me if they catch me here. [Exeunt R.]

[Enter BARMECIDE and INA L. preceded by black Slaves, who are over-
 obsequious, bowing and scraping till the BARMECIDE almost stumbles
 over them. Piano plays march.]

TUNE—"Will you walk a little faster." (A. J. M. for March, 1871.)

BARME. [sings.] Will you stand aside, you villains, for your master and his wife?
 If you don't show better manners, every one shall lose his life.
 Oh, these dusky Ethiopians would exasperate the Cid,
 For whatever you may tell them, they won't do as they are bid.

[Chorus of Slaves.]

Will we? won't we! will we? won't we
 Do as we are bid!

Will we? won't we! will we? won't we
 Do as we are bid!

Then you'd best look sharp about it. Wife, you'll please excuse the slang,
 But these beggars irritate me so I'd like to see them hang.
 Send messengers north, east, and south, I mean, as I'm a sinner,
 To have some guests to join to-night my Barmecidal dinner.

[Chorus of Slaves, as before.]

[Exeunt Slaves.]

BARME. Ina, on this most auspicious occasion,
 I wish to have a quiet conversation.
 Though going in a refectory direction [pointing to the preparations for
 dinner],

We've still some time and food for our reflection.

To-day, you know, we do commemorate

The turning point, to speak so, of our fate.

To-day it was just fifteen years ago

We came in for our fortune at a blow.

INA. Yes, dear Alnaschar, I had ne'er suspected
 We'd be so rich; and had you not detected
 Those thieving rascals at their wicked game,
 Where were our fortune or your glorious fame?

BARME. Ina, my dear, when I recall those days,
 A horrid thought upon my memory preys;
 With this great fortune heaped upon my back
 I feel I should have helped poor Shacabac.

INA. Alas! from what the thieving beggars said,
 I fear they robbed him. Now perhaps he's dead—
 Dead from starvation! and our guilt increases,
 For we, you know, have got his hundred pieces.

BARME. Well, let's not moan, depend on it, some day
 He on his travels will come by this way.

Come, see to dinner, and at my request,
 Appear to-night dressed in your very best.

[Exit INA.]

[Enter Slaves, bringing in SHACABAC, who bows extravagantly, as the Slaves do to the BARMECIDE, the BARMECIDE returning the compliment till they are close to each other.]

BARME. [To SHAC., who looks very sheepish and hungry.] Right welcome, stranger, to our court to-day.

Have you come far? You'll stay and dine, I pray.

SHACABAC [rolling his eyes, which have dark lines underneath them, to make him look hungry] sings.

TUNE—"Just before the Battle, Mother."

The following is a concerted scena, over which much care must be expended to get it perfect. The Slaves are drawn up in line, with a chief, who gives his orders in a kind of very audible whisper, to the tune of *Tommy Dodd*, intercepting the melody of *Just before, &c.*: that is to say, when SHAC. sings the word *you*, at the end of his second line, the chief must simultaneously begin, *Boys, salute, &c.* If SHAC. sings in strict time, holding on his last note till the chief finishes the word *Barmecide*, it will be found simple enough. A musical friend will point out how this is to be managed.

N.B. The Slave always begins on the same note on which SHACABAC ends.

SHAC. Just before the present moment
I was thinking, sir, of you.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute the Barmecide!

SHAC. Hearing you were going to dine, I
Thought I'd like some dinner too.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute the Barmecide!

SHAC. Farewell, hunger! may you never
Goad my appetite again.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute the Barmecide!

SHAC. And, oh! you'll not refuse to keep me
Till I'm numbered with the slain.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute the Barmecide!

Chorus of Slaves join in.

Farewell, hunger! may you never

BARME. [Vide Chorus of "Just before the battle."] May you never hunger.

Goad ^{my} _{his} appetite again.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute the Barmecide!

And oh! you'll } not refuse to keep me }
he'll } you }

BARME. Not refuse to keep you,

Till I'm : }
you're } numbered with the slain.

Shout, &c.

Full Chorus.

Shout your salutation out,

Barmecide! Barmecide!

Twist and turn, and wheel about,

Barmecide! Barmecide!

Shout your salutation out
 Barmecide ! Barmecide !
 And twist and turn, and wheel and say,
 Hurrah for the Barmecide !

BARME. [*sings.*] Sir, the Barmecidal sanction,
 Granted is to your request,

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute, &c.

BARME. And as you seem very hungry,
 We'll begin before the rest.

CHIEF SLAVE. Boys, salute, &c.

Chorus.

Farewell, hunger ! &c. [*as before*].

[*The BARMECIDE leads SHACABAC to a table, and the Slaves silently bring knives and forks and glasses, but no plates or dishes. They sit down, and BARMECIDE pretends to eat voraciously when he is not singing, and SHACABAC follows his example, all in dumb show. The Slaves keep bringing imaginary dishes, under whose weight they seem to groan, and open imaginary bottles, with only the imitation of the drawing of a cork, usually made by a finger in the cheek.*]

BARMECIDE [*sings, recitatively.*] TUNE—"The Fine Old English Gentleman."

I'm going to give you a little dinner, that's perfectly first-rate,
 A sort of dinner I'm sure you'll enjoy, to judge from your present state ;
 I mean to give you entrées, entremets, roast, and soup and fish,
 I'll let you taste the choicest things, and eat of every dish ;
 Like a rare old Baghdad Barmecide, one of the olden time !
 Come taste this soup, there's a jolly lump of green fat, only look,
 This turtle came from the Northern Pole, if I may believe my cook ;
 'Tis flavoured with Iceland pepper, and a nutmeg grown in Sweden,
 And it came very early this morning, by a very slow fish-train from
 Weedon,

To this rare old Baghdad Barmecide, a boy of the olden time.

SHAC. [*sings.*] To criticise your cookery, it was not my intention,
 But this soup is really excellent, your cook must be a French 'un.

BARME. Now try a little turbot, friend, with lemon and shrimp sauce,
 These flounders came from Flanders, on purpose for the course
 Of this rare old Baghdad Barmecide, a boy of the olden time.

BARME. These oysters, fresh up from the beds, I pléde my word, no gammon,
 Will nicely whet the appetite for a plate of summer salmon.

SHAC. Your word, dear sir, is quite enough to garnish any dish
 Though he who feasts upon the soup can hardly need the fish
 Of the rare old Baghdad Barmecide, the boy of the olden time.

BARME. Now, sir, you've only got to name the wine that you prefer,
 Moselle, port, sherry, champagne, or a very choice liqueur.
 I have some hock that's excellent, or if so be you think
 That you prefer Johannisberg, pray say so ; you must drink
 The health of the Baghdad Barmecides, the boys of the olden time.

SHAC. Kind sir, I never touch strong drink.

BARME. Oh, nonsense, sir, you chaff.

Come, try this bottle, you are too abstémious by half.

We'll have a race, no "heel-taps," and I'll bet I beat you hollow.

SHAC. Well, mind, I'm not responsible for what is sure to follow
My toast to the Baghdad Barmecide, the boy of the olden time.

[*They drink.*]

BARME. Come try a little venison now presented by the Sultan.

SHAC. [*feigning to be drunk.*] I tellsh whatsh Ish won't submit to any more insulting.

BARME. Hallo, my friend, you're sleepy; come, you've got to get to bed.

SHAC. Whatsh, whatsh that you shay, shir, I should like to break the head
Of the rare old Baghdad Barmecide, the boy of the olden time.

[*At the close of this verse SHACABAC, pretending to be drunk, rushes at BARMECIDE, and boxes his ears, knocking him over on the floor. BARMECIDE gets up rather angry, and rather frightened too, and says in a nervous kind of voice*]

BARME. Hallo! hallo! 'tis getting rather warm.

SHAC. [*imitating.*] Hallo! hallo! we're going to have a storm.

BARME. [*approaching SHAC. cautiously.*] Hallo!

SHAC. [*squaring round.*] Hallo!

[*etc., etc., both edging up to each other, as if to fight, but neither having the least intention of doing anything but intimidate.*]

BARME. [*having got close up to SHACABAC, perceives an audible wink on the eyelid of the latter, and recognises a duet between SHACABAC's thumb and nose familiar to his childhood.*]

Hallo! so you're an actor.

SHAC. I perceived

The Barmecide was joking. Is he grieved

At what the hungry actor did?

BARME. [*giving his hand.*] Not I.

I like you for it; but why don't you try

Upon the stage to exercise your art?

You've got it in you; take a leading part,

And very soon you would be known to fame.

Your name is?

SHAC. Shacabac! [*tableau.*] Shacabac is my name!

BARME. Allah be praised! my joy I cannot smother.

Shacabac! I'm Alnaschar, your own brother!

[*Tableau très vivant and embrace.*]

SHAC. [*sings.*] TUNE—"The Twin Brothers."

In form and feature, face and limb,

I'm not so like my brother;

[*Appealing to audience.*] Would any one have taken me for him,

Or each for one another?

Twas easy for our kith and kin,

Respectively being sich,

To avoid mistaking me for him,

And point out which is which.

INA. [*shouting outside.*] Husband ! here's Myra ! Shacabac's about !
I found her outside, husband !

BARME. [*going to door.*] How you shout !

Enter INA.

Oh here you are, and here is Shacabac.
Come, we are hungry, dinner in a crack !

[*General embrace, and exit INA.*]

BARME. [*to MYRA.*] Welcome, fair sister, you have had to roam
Too long a beggar. Here you'll find a home ;
And—well—no speeches yet, my wife
Will show you to your room. [*Exit.*] My life
Is now completed, I am happy, Shaccy ;
We'll have some dinner, coffee, music, baccy ;
Let us be jolly for to-night. At least
You soon shall taste a more substantial feast.
Come, follow me, I'll take you to some clothes.

[*To Slaves, in a voice of thunder.*] Villains, attention ! while I blow my nose. [*Suits action to word.*]

Chorus of Slaves.

Will we ? wont we ! do as we are bid [*as before*].

Exeunt SHACABAC and BARMECIDE. Slaves bring on dishes for feast. Opportunity to introduce a hornpipe, if any one can dance one. After an interval just to give time to SHACABAC to get into more gorgeous apparel, enter INA, MYRA, BARMECIDE and SHACABAC. The Orchestra playing a march. They seat themselves. Slave enters.

SLAVE. Three beggars wait outside, sir, in the hall ;
They're much inclined to join the festival.

BARME. Let 'em come in, yes, every one that chooses,
Not even thieves a Barmecide refuses.

[*Enter BEGGARS : all seat themselves, and all sing.*]

TUNE—"A Life on the Ocean Wave."

A life with a Barmecide,
The life of a flowing bowl,
When the dumps are put aside,
And jollity fills the soul.
No more of a wandering life,
No scarcity now of bread,
For Want with her keen-edged knife
Is safely put to bed.
Oh ! a life with a Barmecide,
&c. &c.

SHACABAC [*proposes toast.*] The BARMECIDE !
[*Musical honours. "For he's a jolly good Fellow."*]
All rise and cross hands, and the best singer sings.

TUNE—"Should auld acquaintance."

SOLO. Should old acquaintance be forgot, and never brought to mind?
Should old acquaintance be forgot, and the Baghdad Barmecide?
The Baghdad Barmecide, my boys, the Baghdad Barmecide!
We'll take a cup of kindness yet to the Baghdad Barmecide.

CHORUS.

The Baghdad Barmecide, my boys, &c.

SOLO. [*To audience.*]

And lastly, now our fun is done, a word to you outside;
Have you not got a good word for the Baghdad Barmecide?
Then say with us, the Barmecide! the Baghdad Barmecide!
And fill a cup of kindness to the Baghdad Barmecide.

CHORUS. [*Actors and audience.*]

The Baghdad Barmecide, my boys, the Baghdad Barmecide!
We'll not forget this Christmas, and the Baghdad Barmecide!

Curtain.

THE PEACE-EGG.

A CHRISTMAS TALE.



VERY one ought to be happy at Christmas. But there are many things which ought to be, and yet are not; and people are sometimes sad even in the Christmas holidays.

The Captain and his wife were sad, though it was Christmas Eve. Sad, though they were in the prime of life, blessed with good health, devoted to each other and to their children, with competent means, a comfortable house on a little freehold property of their own, and, one might say, everything that heart could desire. Sad, though they were good people, whose peace of mind had a firmer foundation than on their earthly goods alone; contented people, too, with plenty of occupation for mind and body. Sad—and in the nursery this was held to be past all reason—though the children were performing that ancient and most entertaining play or Christmas mystery of good St. George of England, known as *The Peace-Egg*, for their benefit and behoof alone.

The play was none the worse that most of the actors were too young to learn parts, so that there was very little of the rather tedious dialogue, only plenty of dress and ribbons, and of fighting with the wooden swords. But though St. George looked bonny enough to warm any father's heart, as he marched up and down with an air learned

from many a parade in barrack-square and drill-ground, and though the valiant Slasher did not cry in spite of falling hard and the Doctor treading accidentally on his little finger in picking him up, still the Captain and his wife sighed nearly as often as they smiled, and the mother dropped tears as well as pennies into the cap which the King of Egypt brought round after the performance.

THE CAPTAIN'S WIFE.

Many many years back, the Captain's wife had been a child herself, and had laughed to see the village mummers act the Peace-Egg, and had been quite happy on Christmas Eve. Happy, though she had no mother. Happy, though her father was a stern man, very fond of his only child, but with an obstinate will that not even she dare thwart. She had lived to thwart it, and he had never forgiven her. It was when she married the Captain. The old man had a prejudice against soldiers, which was quite reason enough, in his opinion, for his daughter to sacrifice the happiness of her future life by giving up the soldier she loved. At last he gave her her choice between the Captain and his own favour and money. She chose the Captain, and was disowned and disinherited.

The Captain bore a high character, and was a good and clever officer, but that went for nothing against the old man's whim. He made a very good husband too, but even this did not move his father-in-law, who had never held any intercourse with him or his wife since the day of their marriage, and who had never seen his own grandchildren. Though not so bitterly prejudiced as the old father, the Captain's wife's friends had their doubts about the marriage. The place was not a military station, and they were quiet country folk who knew very little about soldiers, whilst what they imagined was not altogether favourable to "red-coats," as they called them. Soldiers are well-looking generally, it is true (and the Captain was more than well-looking—he was handsome); brave, of course, it is their business (and the Captain had V.C. after his name, and several bits of ribbon on his patrol jacket). But then, thought the good people, they are here to-day and gone to-morrow, you "never know where you have them;" they are probably in debt, possibly married to several women in several foreign countries, and, though they are very courteous in society, who knows how they treat their wives when they drag them off from their

natural friends and protectors to distant lands where no one can call them to account?

"Ah, poor thing!" said Mrs. John Bull, Jun., as she took off her husband's coat on his return from business, a week after the Captain's wedding, "I wonder how she feels? There's no doubt the old man behaved disgracefully, but it's a great risk marrying a soldier. It stands to reason military men aren't domestic; and I wish——Lucy Jane, fetch your papa's slippers, quick!——she'd had the sense to settle down comfortably among her friends with a man that would have taken care of her."

"Officers are a wild set, I expect," said Mr. Bull, complacently, as he stretched his limbs in his own particular armchair, into which no member of his family ever intruded. "But the red-coats carry the day with plenty of girls who ought to know better. You women are always caught by a bit of finery. However, there's no use our bothering our heads about it. As she has brewed she must drink."

The Captain's wife's drinking was lighter and more palatable than her friends believed. The Captain (who took off his own coat when he came home, and never wore slippers but in his dressing-room) was domestic enough. A selfish companion must, doubtless, be a great trial amid the hardships of military life, but when a soldier is kind-hearted he is often a much more helpful and thoughtful and handy husband than an equally well-meaning civilian. Amid the ups and downs of their wanderings, the discomforts of shipboard, and of stations in the colonies, bad servants, and unwonted sicknesses, the Captain's tenderness never failed. If the life was rough, the Captain was ready. He had been, by turns, in one strait or another, sick nurse, doctor, carpenter, nursemaid, and cook to his family, and had, moreover, an idea that nobody filled these offices quite so well as himself. Withal, his very profession kept him neat, well-dressed, and active. In the roughest of their ever-changing quarters he was a smarter man, more like the lover of his wife's young days, than Mr. Bull amid his stationary comforts. Then if the Captain's wife was—as her friends said—"never settled," she was also for ever entertained by new scenes; and domestic mischances do not weigh very heavily on people whose possessions are few and their intellectual interests many. It is true that there were ladies in the Captain's regiment who passed by sea and land from one quarter of the globe to another, amid strange

climates and customs, strange trees and flowers, beasts and birds; from the glittering snows of North America to the orchids of the Cape, from beautiful Pera to the lily-covered hills of Japan, and who in no place rose above the fret of domestic worries, and had little to tell on their return but of the universal misconduct of servants, from Irish "helps" in the colonies, to *compradors* and China-boys at Shanghai. But it was not so with the Captain's wife. Moreover, she became accustomed to her fate, and she moved her whole establishment from the Curragh to Corfu with less anxiety than that felt by Mrs. Bull over a port-wine stain on the best table-cloth.

And yet, as years went and children came, the Captain and his wife grew tired of travelling. New scenes were small comfort when they heard of the death of old friends. One foot of murky English sky was dearer, after all, than miles of the unclouded heavens of the south. The grey hills and over-grown lanes of her old home haunted the Captain's wife by night and day, and home-sickness (that weariest of all sicknesses) began to take the light out of her eyes before their time. It preyed upon the Captain too. Now and then he would say, fretfully, "I *should* like an English resting-place, however small, before *everybody* is dead! But the children's prospects have to be considered." The continued estrangement from the old man was an abiding sorrow also, and they had hopes that, if only they could get to England, he might be persuaded to peace and charity this time.

At last they were sent home. But the hard old father still would not relent. He returned their letters unopened. This bitter disappointment made the Captain's wife so ill that she almost died, and in one month the Captain's hair became iron grey. He reproached himself for having ever taken the daughter from her father, "to kill her at last," as he said. And (thinking of his own children) he even reproached himself for having robbed the old widower of his only child. After two years at home his regiment was ordered to India. He failed to effect an exchange, and they prepared to move once more—from Chatham to Calcutta. Never before had the packing to which she was so well accustomed been so bitter a task to the Captain's wife.

It was at the darkest hour of this gloomy time that the Captain came in, waving above his head a letter which changed all their plans.

Close by the old home of the Captain's wife there had lived a man, much older than herself, who yet had loved her with a devotion as

great as that of the young Captain. She never knew it, for when he saw that she had given her heart to his younger rival, he kept a generous silence, and never asked for what he knew he might have had—the old man's influence and authority in his favour. So generous was the affection which he could never conquer, that he constantly tried to reconcile the father to his children whilst he lived, and, when he died, he bequeathed his house and small estate to the woman he had loved.

"It will be a legacy of peace," he thought, on his deathbed. "The old man cannot hold out when she and her children are constantly in sight. And it may please God that I shall know of the reunion I have not been permitted to see with my eyes."

And thus it came about that the Captain's regiment went to India without him, and that the Captain's wife and her father lived on opposite sides of the same road.

MASTER ROBERT.

The eldest of the Captain's children was a boy. He was named Robert, after his grandfather, and seemed to have inherited a good deal of the old gentleman's character, mixed with gentler traits. He was a fair, fine boy, tall and stout for his age, with the Captain's regular features, and (he flattered himself) the Captain's firm step and martial bearing. He was apt—like his grandfather—to hold his own will to be other people's law, and (happily for the peace of the nursery) this opinion was devoutly shared by his brother Nicholas. Though the Captain had sold his commission, Robin continued to command an irregular force of Volunteers in the nursery, and never was colonel more despotic. His brother and sister were, by turns infantry, cavalry, engineers and artillery, according to his whim, and when his affections finally settled upon the Highlanders of "The Black Watch," no female power could induce him to keep his stockings above his knees, or his knickerbockers below them.

The Captain alone was a match for his strong-willed son.

"If you please, sir," said Sarah, one morning, flouncing in upon the Captain, just as he was about to start for the neighbouring town—"If you please, sir, I wish you'd speak to Master Robert. He's past my powers."

"I've no doubt of it," thought the Captain, but he only said, "Well, what's the matter?"

"Night after night do I put him to bed," said Sarah, "and night after night does he get up as soon as I'm out of the room, and says he's orderly officer for the evening, and goes about in his night-shirt, and his feet as bare as boards."

The Captain fingered his heavy moustache to hide a smile, but he listened patiently to Sarah's complaints.

"It ain't so much *him* I should mind, sir," she continued, "but he goes round the beds and wakes up the other young gentlemen and Miss Dora, one after another, and when I speak to him, he gives me all the sauce he can lay his tongue to, and says he's going round the guards. The other night I tried to put him back into his bed, but he got away and ran all over the house, me hunting him everywhere, and not a sign of him, till he jumps out on me from the garret-stairs, and nearly knocks me down. 'I've visited the outposts, Sarah,' says he; 'all's well.' And off he goes to bed as bold as brass."

"Have you spoken to your mistress?" asked the Captain.

"Yes, sir," said Sarah. "And missis spoke to him, and he promised not to go round the guards again."

"Has he broken his promise?" asked the Captain, with a look of anger, and also of surprise.

"When I opened the door last night, sir," continued Sarah, in her shrill treble, "what should I see in the dark but Master Robert a-walking up and down with the carpet-brush stuck in his arm. 'Who goes there?' says he. 'You owdacious boy!' says I. 'Didn't you promise your Ma you'd leave off them tricks?' 'I'm not going round the guards,' says he; 'I promised not. But I'm for sentry duty to-night.' And say what I would to him, all he had for me was, 'You mustn't speak to a sentry on duty.' So I says, 'As sure as I live till morning, I'll go to your Pa,' for he pays no more attention to his Ma than to me, nor to any one else."

"Please to see that the chair-bed in my dressing-room is moved into your mistress's bedroom," said the Captain. "I will see to Master Robert."

With this Sarah had to content herself, and she went back to the nursery. Robert was nowhere to be seen, and made no reply to her summons. On this the unwary nursemaid flounced into the bedroom

to look for him, when Robert, who was hidden beneath a table, darted forth, and promptly locked her in.

"You're under arrest," he shouted, through the keyhole.

"Let me out!" shrieked Sarah.



"I'll send a file of the guard to fetch you to the orderly-room, by-and-by," said Robert, "for preferring frivolous complaints." And he departed to the farmyard to look at the ducks.

"That night, when Robert went up to bed, the Captain quietly looked him into his dressing-room, from which the bed had been removed.

"You're for sentry duty, to-night," said the Captain. "The carpet-brush is in the corner. Good-evening."

As his father anticipated, Robert was soon tired of the sentry game in these new circumstances, and long before the night had half worn away he wished himself safely undressed and in his own comfortable bed. At half-past twelve o'clock he felt as if he could bear it no longer, and knocked at the Captain's door.

"Who goes there?" said the Captain.

"Mayn't I go to bed, please?" whined poor Robert.

"Certainly not," said the Captain. "You're on duty."

And on duty poor Robert had to remain, for the Captain had a will as well as his son. So he rolled himself up in his father's railway rug, and slept on the floor.

The next night he was very glad to go quietly to bed, and remain there.

IN THE NURSERY.

The Captain's children sat at breakfast in a large, bright nursery. It was the room where the old bachelor had died, and now *her* children made it merry. This was just what he would have wished.

They all sat round the table, for it was breakfast-time. There were five of them, and five bowls of boiled bread and milk smoked before them. Sarah (a foolish, gossiping girl, who acted as nurse till better could be found) was waiting on them, and by the table sat Darkie, the black retriever, his long, curly back swaying slightly from the difficulty of holding himself up, and his solemn hazel eyes fixed very intently on each and all of the breakfast bowls. He was as silent and sagacious as Sarah was talkative and empty-headed. The expression of his face was that of King Charles I. as painted by Vandyke. Though large, he was unassuming. Pax, the pug, on the contrary, who came up to the first joint of Darkie's leg, stood defiantly on his dignity (and his short stumps). He always placed himself in front of the bigger dog, and made a point of hustling him in doorways and going first downstairs. He strutted like a beadle, and carried his tail more tightly curled than a bishop's crook. He looked as one may imagine the Frog in the Fable would have looked had he been able to swell himself rather nearer to the size of the ox. This was partly due

to his very prominent eyes, and partly to an obesity, favoured by habits of lying inside the fender, and of eating meals more proportioned to his consequence than to his hunger. They were both favourites of two years' standing, and had very nearly been given away, when the good news came of an English home for the family, dogs and all.

Robert's tongue was seldom idle, even at meals. "Are you a Yorkshirewoman, Sarah?" he asked, pausing, with his spoon full in his hand.

"No, Master Robert," said Sarah.

"But you understand Yorkshire, don't you? I can't, very often; But Mamma can, and can speak it, too. Papa says Mamma always talks Yorkshire to servants and poor people. She used to talk Yorkshire to Themistocles, Papa said, and he said it was no good; for though Themistocles knew a lot of languages, he didn't know that. And Mamma laughed, and said she didn't know she did. Themistocles was our man-servant in Corfu," Robin added, in explanation. "He stole lots of things, Themistocles did; but Papa found him out."

Robin now made a rapid attack on his bread and milk, after which he broke out again.

"Sarah, who is that tall old gentleman at church, in the seat near the pulpit? He wears a cloak like what the Blues wear, only all blue, and is tall enough for a lifeguardsman. He stood when we were kneeling down, and said, *Almighty and most merciful Father* louder than anybody."

Sarah knew who the old gentleman was, and knew also that the children did not know, and that their parents did not see fit to tell them as yet. But she had a passion for telling and hearing news, and would rather gossip with a child than not gossip at all. "Never your mind, Master Robin," she said, nodding sagaciously. "Little boys aren't to know everything."

"Ah, then, I know you don't know," replied Robert; "if you did, you'd tell. Nicholas, give some of your bread to Darkie and Pax. I've done mine. *For what we have received the Lord make us truly thankful.* Say your grace, and put your chair away, and come along. I want to hold a court-martial." And seizing his own chair by the seat, Robin carried it swiftly to its corner. As he passed Sarah he observed tauntingly, "You pretend to know, but you don't."

"I do," said Sarah.

"You don't," said Robin.

"Your ma's forbid you to contradict, Master Robin," said Sarah; "and

if you do, I shall tell her. I know well enough who the old gentleman is, and perhaps I might tell you, only you'd go straight off and tell again."

"No, no, I wouldn't!" shouted Robin. "I can keep a secret indeed I can! Pinch my little finger, and try. Do, do tell me, Sarah, there's a dear Sarah, and then I shall know you know." And he danced round her, catching at her skirts.

To keep a secret was beyond Sarah's powers.

"Do let my dress be, Master Robin," she said, "you're ripping out all the gathers, and listen while I whisper. As sure as you're a living boy, that gentleman's your own grandpapa."

Robin lost his hold on Sarah's dress; his arms fell by his side, and he stood with his brows knit for some minutes, thinking. Then he said, emphatically, "What lies you do tell, Sarah!"

"Oh, Robin!" cried Nicholas, who had drawn near, his thick curls standing stark with curiosity, "Mamma said lies wasn't a proper word, and you promised not to say it again."

"I forgot," said Robin. "I didn't mean to break my promise. But she does tell—ahem!—*you know what*."

"You wicked boy!" cried the enraged Sarah; "how dare you to say such a thing, and everybody in the place knows he's your ma's own pa."

"I'll go and ask her," said Robin, and he was at the door in a moment; but Sarah, alarmed by the thought of getting into a scrape herself, caught him by the arm.

"Don't you go, love; it'll only make your ma angry. There; it was all my nonsense."

"Then it's not true?" said Robin, indignantly. "What did you tell me so for?"

"It was all my jokes and nonsense," said the unscrupulous Sarah. "But your ma wouldn't like to know I've said such a thing. And Master Robert wouldn't be so mean as to tell tales, would he, love?"

"I'm not mean," said Robin, stoutly; "and I don't tell tales; but you do, and you tell *you know what*, besides. However, I won't go this time; but I'll tell you what—if you tell tales of me to Papa any more, I'll tell him what you said about the old gentleman in the blue cloak." With which parting threat, Robin strode off to join his brothers and sister.

Sarah's tale had put the court-martial out of his head, and he leaned against the tall fender, gazing at his little sister, who was tenderly nursing a well-worn doll. Robin sighed.

"What a long time that doll takes to wear out, Dora!" said he. "When will it be done?"

"Oh, not yet, not yet!" cried Dora, clasping the doll to her, and turning away. "She's quite good, yet."

"How miserly you are," said her brother; "and selfish, too; for you know I can't have a military funeral till you'll let me bury that old thing."

Dora began to cry.

"There you go, crying!" said Robin, impatiently. "Look here: I won't take it till you get the new one on your birthday. You can't be so mean as not to let me have it then?"

But Dora's tears still fell. "I love this one so much," she sobbed. "I love her better than the new one."

"You want both; that's it," said Robin, angrily. "Dora, you're the meanest girl I ever knew!"

At which unjust and painful accusation Dora threw herself and the doll upon their faces, and wept bitterly. The eyes of soft-hearted Nicholas began to fill with tears, and he squatted down before her, looking most dismal. He had a fellow-feeling for her attachment to an old toy, and yet Robin's will was law to him.

"Couldn't we make a coffin, and pretend the body was inside?" he suggested.

"No, we couldn't," said Robin. "I wouldn't play the Dead March after an empty candle-box. It's a great shame—and I promised she should be chaplain in one of my night-gowns, too."

"Perhaps you'll get just as fond of the new one," said Nicholas, turning to Dora.

But Dora only cried, "No, no! he shall have the new one to bury, and I'll keep my poor, dear, darling Betsy." And she clasped Betsy tighter than before.

"That's the meanest thing you've said yet," retorted Robin; "for you know Mamma wouldn't let me bury the new one." And with an air of great disgust, he quitted the nursery.

"A MUMMING WE WILL GO."

Nicholas had sore work to console his little sister, and Betsy's prospects were in a very unfavourable state, when a diversion was

caused in her favour, by a new whim that put the military funeral out of Robin's head.

After he left the nursery he strolled out of doors, and, peeping through the gate at the end of the drive, he saw a party of boys going through what looked like a military exercise with sticks and a good deal of stamping; but, instead of mere words of command, they all spoke by turns, as in a play. In spite of their strong Yorkshire accent, Robin overheard a good deal, and it sounded very fine. Not being at all shy, he joined them, and asked so many questions that he soon got to know all about it. They were practising a Christmas mumming-play, called "The Peace-Egg." Why it was called thus they could not tell him, as there was nothing whatever about eggs in it, and so far from being a play of peace, it was made up of a series of battles between certain valiant knights and princes, of whom St. George of England was the chief and conqueror. The rehearsal being over, Robin went with the boys to the sexton's house (he was father to the "King of Egypt"), where they showed him the dresses they were to wear. These were made of gay-coloured materials, and covered with ribbons, except that of the "Black Prince of Paradine," which was black, as became his title. The boys also showed him the book from which they learned their parts, and which was to be bought for one penny at the post-office shop.

"Then are you the mummers who come round at Christmas, and act in people's kitchens, and people give them money, that Mamma used to tell us about?" said Robin.

St. George of England looked at his companions as if for counsel as to how far they might commit themselves, and then replied, with Yorkshire caution, "Well, I suppose we are."

"And do you go out in the snow from one house to another at night; and oh, don't you enjoy it?" cried Robin.

"We like it well enough," St. George admitted.

Robin bought a copy of "The Peace-Egg." He was resolved to have a nursery performance, and to act the part of St. George himself. The others were willing for what he wished, but there were difficulties. In the first place, there are eight characters in the play, and there were only five children. They decided among themselves to leave out "the Fool," and Mamma said that another character was not to be acted by any of them, or indeed mentioned; "the little one who comes

in at the end," Robin explained. Mamma had her reasons, and these were always good. She had not been altogether pleased that Robin had bought the play. It was a very old thing, she said, and very queer; not adapted for a child's play. If Mamma thought the parts not quite fit for the children to learn, they found them much too long; so in the end she picked out some bits for each, which they learned easily, and which, with a good deal of fighting, made quite as good a story of it as if they had done the whole. What may have been wanting otherwise was made up for by the dresses, which were charming.

Robin was St. George, Nicholas the Valiant Slasher, Dora the Doctor, and the other two Hector and the King of Egypt. "And now we've no Black Prince!" cried Robin, in dismay.

"Let Darkie be the Black Prince," said Nicholas. "When you wave your stick he'll jump for it, and then you can pretend to fight with him."

"It's not a stick, it's a sword," said Robin. "However, Darkie may be the Black Prince."

"And what's Pax to be?" asked Dora; "for you know he will come if Darkie does, and he'll run in before everybody else too."

"Then he must be the Fool," said Robin, "and it will do very well, for the Fool comes in before the rest, and Pax can have his red coat on, and the collar with the little bells."

CHRISTMAS EVE.

Robin thought that Christmas would never come. To the Captain and his wife it seemed to come too fast. They had hoped it might bring reconciliation with the old man, but they had hoped in vain.

There were times now when the Captain almost regretted the old bachelor's bequest. The familiar scenes of her old home sharpened his wife's grief. To see her father every Sunday in church, with marks of age and infirmity upon him, but with not a look of tenderness for his only child, this tried her sorely.

"She felt it less abroad," thought the Captain. "An English home in which she frets herself to death is, after all, no great boon."

Christmas Eve came.

"I'm sure it's quite Christmas enough now," said Robin. "We'll have 'The Peace-Egg' to-night."

So as the Captain and his wife sat sadly over their fire, the door opened, and Pax ran in shaking his bells, and followed by the nursery mummies. The performance was most successful. It was by no means pathetic, and yet, as has been said, the Captain's wife shed tears.

"What is the matter, Mamma?" said St. George, abruptly dropping his sword and running up to her.

"Don't tease Mamma with questions," said the Captain, "she is not very well, and rather sad. We must all be very kind and good to poor dear Mamma;" and the Captain raised his wife's hand to his lips as he spoke. Robin seized the other hand and kissed it tenderly. He was very fond of his mother. At this moment Pax took a little run, and jumped on to Mamma's lap, where, sitting facing the company, he opened his black mouth and yawned, with a ludicrous inappropriateness worthy of any clown. It made everybody laugh.

"And now we'll go and act in the kitchen," said Nicholas.

"Supper at nine o'clock, remember," shouted the Captain. "And we are going to have real furmety and Yule cakes, such as Mamma used to tell us of when we were abroad."

"Hurra!" shouted the mummies, and they ran off, Pax leaping from his seat just in time to hustle the Black Prince in the doorway. When the dining-room door was shut St. George raised his hand, and said "Hush!"

The mummies pricked their ears, but there was only a distant harsh and scraping sound, as of stones rubbed together.

"They're cleaning the passages," St. George went on, "and Sarah told me they meant to finish the mistletoe, and have everything cleaned up by supper-time. They don't want us, I know. Look here, we'll go *real mumming* instead. That *will* be fun!"

The Valiant Slasher grinned with delight.

"But will mamma let us?" he inquired.

"Oh, it will be all right if we're back by supper-time," said St. George, hastily. "Only of course we must take care not to catch cold. Come and help me to get some wraps."

The old oak chest in which spare shawls, rugs, and coats were kept was soon ransacked, and the mummies' gay dresses hidden by motley wrappers. But no sooner did Darkie and Pax behold the coats, &c., than they at once began to leap and bark, as it was their custom to do when they saw any one dressing to go out. Robin was

so sorely afraid that this would betray them; but though the Captain and his wife heard the barking they did not guess the cause.

So the front door being very gently opened and closed, the nursery mummings stole away.

THE NURSERY MUMMERS AND THE OLD MAN.

It was a very fine night. The snow was well-trodden on the drive, so that it did not wet their feet, but on the trees and shrubs it hung soft and white.

"It's much jollier being out at night than in the daytime," said Robin.

"Much," responded Nicholas, with intense feeling.

"We'll go a wassailing next week," said Robin. "I know all about it, and perhaps we shall get a good lot of money, and then we'll buy tin swords with scabbards for next year. I don't like these sticks. Oh, dear! I wish it wasn't so long between one Christmas and another."

"Where shall we go first?" asked Nicholas, as they turned into the high road. But before Robin could reply, Dora clung to Nicholas, crying, "Oh, look at those men!"

The boys looked up the road, down which three men were coming in a very unsteady fashion, and shouting as they rolled from side to side.

"They're drunk," said Nicholas; "and they're shouting at us."

"Oh, run, run!" cried Dora; and down the road they ran, the men shouting and following them. They had not run far, when Hector caught his foot in the Captain's great-coat, which he was wearing, and came down headlong in the road. They were close by a gate, and when Nicholas had set Hector upon his legs, St. George hastily opened it.

"This is the first house," he said. "We'll act here;" and all, even the Valiant Slasher, pressed in as quickly as possible. Once safe within the grounds, they shouldered their sticks, and resumed their composure.

"You're going to the front door," said Nicholas. "Mummings ought to go to the back."

"We don't know where it is," said Robin, and he rang the front door bell. There was a pause. Then lights shone, steps were heard,

and at last a sound of much unbarring, unbolting, and unlocking. It might have been a prison. Then the door was opened by an elderly, timid-looking woman, who held a tallow candle above her head.

"Who's there?" she said, "at this time of night?"

"We're Christmas mummers," said Robin, stoutly; "we didn't know the way to the back door, but——"

"And don't you know better than to come here?" said the woman. "Be off with you, as fast as you can."

"You're only the servant," said Robin. "Go and ask your master and mistress if they wouldn't like to see us act. We do it very well."

"You impudent boy, be off with you!" repeated the woman. "Master 'd no more let you nor any other such rubbish set foot in this house——"

"Woman!" shouted a voice close behind her, which made her start as if she had been shot, "who authorizes you to say what your master will or will not do, before you've asked him? The boy is right. You are the servant, and it is not your business to choose for me whom I shall or shall not see."

"I meant no harm, sir, I'm sure," said the housekeeper; "but I thought you'd never——"

"My good woman," said her master, "if I had wanted somebody to think for me, you're the last person I should have employed. I hire you to obey orders, not to think."

"I'm sure, sir," said the housekeeper, whose only form of argument was reiteration, "I never thought you would have seen them——"

"Then you were wrong," shouted her master. "I will see them. Bring them in."

He was a tall, gaunt old man, and Robin stared at him for some minutes, wondering where he could have seen somebody very like him. At last he remembered. It was the old gentleman of the blue cloak.

The children threw off their wraps, the housekeeper helping them, and chattering ceaselessly, from sheer nervousness.

"Well, to be sure," said she, "their dresses are pretty, too. And they seem quite a better sort of children, they talk quite genteel. I might ha' knowed they weren't like common mummers, but I was so flustered, hearing the bell go so late, and——"

"Are they ready?" said the old man, who had stood like a ghost in the dim light of the flaring tallow candle, grimly watching the proceedings.

"Yes, sir. Shall I take them to the kitchen, sir?"

"—for you and the other idle hussies to gape and grin at? No. Bring them to the library," he snapped, and then stalked off, leading the way.

The housekeeper accordingly led them to the library, and then withdrew, nearly falling on her face as she left the room by stumbling over Darkie, who slipped in last like a black shadow.

The old man was seated in an old carved chair by the fire.

"I never said the dogs were to come in," he said.

"But we can't do without them, please," said Robin, boldly. "You see there are eight people in 'The Peace-Egg,' and there are only five of us; and so Darkie has to be the Black Prince, and Pax has to be the Fool, and so we have to have them."

"Five and two make seven," said the old man, with a grim smile; "what do you do for the eighth?"

"Oh, that's the little one at the end," said Robin, confidentially. "Mamma said we weren't to mention him, but I think that's because we're children. You're grown up you know, so I'll show you the book, and you can see for yourself," he went on, drawing 'The Peace-Egg' from his pocket: "there, that's the picture of him, on the last page; black, with horns and a tail."

The old man's stern face relaxed into a broad smile as he examined the grotesque woodcut; but when he turned to the first page the smile vanished in a deep frown, and his eyes shone like hot coals with anger. He had seen Robin's name.

"Who sent you here?" he asked, in a hoarse voice. "Speak, and speak the truth! Did your mother send you here?"

Robin thought the old man was angry with them for playing the truant. He said, slowly, "N—no. She didn't exactly send us; but I don't think she'll mind our having come if we get back in time for supper. Mamma never *forbid* our going mumming, you know."

"I don't suppose she ever thought of it," Nicholas said, candidly, wagging his curly head from side to side.

"She knows we're mummers," said Robin, "for she helped us. When we were abroad, you know, she used to tell us about the mummers acting at Christmas, when she was a little girl; and so we

thought we'd be mummers, and so we acted to Papa and Mamma, and so we thought we'd act to the maids, but they were cleaning the passages, and so we thought we'd really go mumming; and we've got several other houses to go to before supper-time; we'd better begin, I think," said Robin; and without more ado he began to march round and round, raising his sword, and shouting—

"I am St. George, who from Old England sprung,
My famous name throughout the world hath rung."

And the performance went off quite as creditably as before.

As the children acted the old man's anger wore off. He watched them with an interest he could not repress. When Nicholas took some hard thwacks from St. George without flinching the old man clapped his hands; and, after the encounter between St. George and the Black Prince, he said he would not have had the dogs excluded on any consideration. It was just at the end, when they were all marching round and round, holding on by each other's swords "over the shoulder," and singing "A mumming we will go, &c.," that Nicholas suddenly brought the circle to a standstill by stopping dead short, and staring up at the wall before him.

"What are you stopping for?" said St. George, indignantly turning round.

"Look there!" cried Nicholas, pointing to a little painting which hung above the old man's head.

Robin looked, and said, abruptly, "It's Dora."

"Which is Dora?" asked the old man, in a strange, sharp tone.

"Here she is," said Robin and Nicholas in one breath, as they dragged her forward.

"She's the Doctor," said Robin; "and you can't see her face for her things. Dor, take off your cap and pull back that hood. There! Oh, it is like her!"

It was a portrait of her mother as a child; but of this the nursery mummers knew nothing. The old man looked as the peaked cap and hood fell away from Dora's face and fair curls, and then he uttered a sharp cry, and buried his head upon his hands. The boys stood stupefied, but Dora ran up to him, and, putting her little hands on his arms, said, in childish pitying tones, "Oh, I am so sorry! Have you got a headache? May Robin put the shovel in the fire for you? Mamma has hot shovels for her headaches." And, though the old man

did not speak or move, she went on coaxing him, and stroking his head, on which the hair was white. At this moment Pax took one of his unexpected runs, and jumped on to the old man's knee, in his own particular fashion, and then yawned at the company. The old man was startled, and lifted his face suddenly. It was wet with tears.

"Why, you're crying!" exclaimed the children with one breath.

"It's very odd," said Robin, fretfully. "I can't think what's the matter to-night. Mamma was crying too when we were acting, and papa said we weren't to tease her with questions, and he kissed her hand, and I kissed her hand too. And Papa said we must all be very good and kind to poor dear Mamma, and so I mean to be, she's so good. And I think we'd better go home, or perhaps she'll be frightened," Robin added.

"She's so good, is she?" asked the old man. He had put Pax off his knee, and taken Dora on to it.

"Oh, isn't she!" said Nicholas, swaying his curly head from side to side as usual.

"She's always good," said Robin, emphatically; "and so's Papa. But I'm always doing something I oughtn't to," he added, slowly. "But then, you know, I don't pretend to obey Sarah. I don't care a fig for Sarah; and I won't obey any woman but Mamma."

"Who's Sarah?" asked the grandfather.

"She's our nurse," said Robin, "and she tells—I mustn't say what she tells—but it's not the truth. She told one about *you* the other day," he added.

"About me?" said the old man.

"She said you were our grandpapa. So then I knew she was telling *you know what*."

"How did you know it wasn't true?" the old man asked.

"Why, of course," said Robin, "if you were our Mamma's father, you'd know her, and be very fond of her, and come and see her. And then you'd be our grandfather, too, and you'd have us to see you, and perhaps give us Christmas-boxes. I wish you were," Robin added with a sigh. "It would be very nice."

"Would *you* like it?" asked the old man of Dora.

And Dora, who was half asleep and very comfortable, put her little arms about his neck as she was wont to put them round the Captain's, and said, "Very much."

He put her down at last, very tenderly, almost unwillingly, and left

the children alone. By-and-by he returned, dressed in the blue cloak, and took Dora up again.

"I will see you home," he said.

The children were not missed. The clock had only just struck nine when there came a knock on the door of the dining-room, where the Captain and wife still sat by the Yule log. She said "Come in," wearily, thinking it was the furmety and the Christmas cakes.

But it was her father, with her child in his arms!

PEACE AND GOODWILL.

Lucy Jane Bull and her sisters were quite old enough to understand a good deal of grown-up conversation when they overheard it. Thus, when a friend of Mrs. Bull's observed during an afternoon call that she believed that "officers' wives were very dressy," the young ladies were at once resolved to keep a sharp look-out for the Captain's wife's bonnet in church on Christmas Day.

The Bulls had just taken their seats when the Captain's wife came in. They really were going to hide their faces, and look at the bonnet afterwards, but for the startling sight that met the gaze of the congregation. The old grandfather walked into church abreast of the Captain.

"They've met in the porch," whispered Mr. Bull under the shelter of his hat.

"They can't quarrel publicly in a place of worship," said Mrs. Bull, turning pale.

"She's gone into his seat," cried Lucy Jane in a shrill whisper.

"And the children after her," added the other sister, incautiously, aloud.

There was now no doubt about the matter. The old man in his blue cloak stood for a few moments politely disputing the question of precedence with his handsome son-in-law. Then the Captain bowed and passed in, and the old man followed him.

By the time that the service was ended everybody knew of the happy peacemaking, and was glad. One old friend after another came up with blessings and good wishes. This was a proper Christmas, indeed, they said. There was a general rejoicing.

But only the grandfather and his children knew that it was owing to "The Peace-Egg."

LITTLE ANNIE'S CHRISTMAS.



HE snow was falling soft and fast,
 And thickly on the ground it lay,
 While borne upon the wintry blast
 Came the sweet chimes of Christmas Day,
 Which seemed to tell to all the earth
 The tidings of the Saviour's birth.

Gladly was heard the merry chime
 In village homes where holly hung,
 And the sweet songs of Christmas time
 By many a happy child were sung;
 Few heeded there the frost and snow,
 For few were suffered want to know.

But oh! the sweet and merry bell
 A very different welcome meets
 In the dark town, where crowded dwell
 The poor in narrow courts and streets;
 There not the snow itself is white,
 And scarce is known the holly bright.

And there, upon that Christmas morn,
 Up in a garret dark and high,
 Whose window, broken and forlorn,
 Looks out upon an inch of sky,
 A little shivering sufferer lay,
 Unconscious it was Christmas Day.

Poor little Annie, all alone,
 Lay on her hard and wretched bed,
 And with a weary, painful moan
 Turned to and fro her aching head;
 No mother by her side to stand,
 With fond caress and cooling hand.

Her mother died when little Anne
 Was scarcely more than three years old;
 Her father, though an honest man,
 And not unkind, was rough and cold;
 A costermonger he by trade,
 And small the profits that he made.

Now all alone his child must stay,
A helpless cripple through a fall,
And all the time he was away
She could not move or walk at all;
It was a lonely life to lead,
She had not learned to work or read.

So all that dreary Christmas morn
Alone the crippled Annie lay,
Listening, as to her ears were borne
The merry chimes of Christmas Day,
While weary tears stole down her cheek,
And she was lonely, sad, and weak.

She ate her humble dinner soon
(For her there was no Christmas feast),
And through the dreary afternoon
Her weariness and pain increased;
Till just about the hour of four
She heard a knocking at the door.

"Who's there?" the little sufferer cried,
And turned towards it eagerly.
"May I come in?" a voice replied;
"Oh yes, do please!" then answered she:
The door was opened quickly then
By a nice little girl of ten.

"Oh, if you please, I thought I might;
I live with mother down below;
I knew you were alone to-night,
And might be tired and sad, you know.
My name is little Margaret—
You have not told me your name yet."

Soon on poor little Annie's bed
Her new-found friend beside her sat,
She laid her cool hand on her head,
And soothed her with her pleasant chat,
Till Annie felt that she could bear
The pain much better with her there.

"It snows so fast," said Margaret;
"And as I went to church to-day,
My shawl and bonnet got quite wet,
And I could scarcely see my way;

But, oh! it well was worth the treat,
The Christmas carols were so sweet."



"And is this Christmas?" Annie said:
"When mother lived I used to know,
But no one tells me now she's dead;
The days seem all so sad and slow:
I should know more if I went out
Like you, but I can't run about."

"Once," Margaret answered, "I was ill,
And used to lie in constant pain,
As you do now, so sad and still,
They thought I should not move again;
And mother often used to cry,
Thinking her only child would die.

"Mother was very poor, you know,
And had to work for all our food,
For father died quite long ago.
'Twas hard to think I was no good,
But like a useless log must be,
While mother worked so hard for me."

"But how did you get well and strong?"
With eager voice poor Annie said.
"Will not the story be too long,"
Asked Margaret, "for your poor head?"
But little Annie cried, "Oh no!
Please do not be in haste to go."

"Well, it was one cold day last year,
The snow was falling like to-day;
But then we were not living here,
But in a court another way;
Mother to sell her work was gone,
And I was left all day alone,

"When in the afternoon there came
To see me a good clergyman:
He talked to me and asked my name,
And when it was my pain began;
He gave me food and went away,
Then with a doctor came next day.

"Mother was working then at home,
The gentlemen took her aside;
I could not think what made them come,
But when they went poor mother cried;
And then she told me of a plan
Made by that good, kind clergyman.

"He said that I could be made well,
If I could be both nursed and fed,
And thought, though he could not quite tell,
That there might be an empty bed

In what he called an hospital,
Meant for sick children, poor and small.

"Then in a week he came once more,
And a kind, gentle lady, too,
Drove in her carriage to the door;
And he said, 'We have come for you.'
So mother made me clean and neat,
And we were driven to the street

"Where the big house for children stood.
I was so frightened, Annie dear,
When mother told me to be good,
And said, 'Good-bye,' and left me there;
Then some one carried me away
To a large room where children lay

"So snugly, in such clean white beds;
And oh! it looked so fresh and bright,
And they had pictures at their heads,
And counterpanes so dazzling white,
And some of them had golden hair,
While some were very pale and fair.

"Across each bed there was a shelf,
And the kind lady with me said
That I should have one for myself
When I could sit up in my bed.
To put the toys on they were meant,
Which richer little children sent.

"Oh, Annie, 'twas like Heaven there!
I wish I could be ill again
Almost, that I again might share
The joys that seemed to drown my pain;
I often used quite to forget
I was poor little Margaret.

"All were so kind, and oh, so good!
They did not let me know a grief;
We always had such wholesome food,
And for each pain they found relief;
And then they taught me how to read
And write—they did indeed!

"They taught me, Annie, how to pray,
And thank God for my happiness;
And every night, and every day,
I ask Him on my knees to bless
The inmates of Great Ormond Street,
And that we all in Heaven may meet."

Poor Annie's eager, wistful eyes
Were ever fixed on Margaret's face,
And sometimes heavy, long-drawn sighs,
At thoughts of such a happy place,
Came from the little weary one;
She smiled, though, when the tale was done.

"It is not meant for me," she said;
"Oh, thank you so much, Margaret!
And when I feel my back and head,
I'll think my time is not come yet;
Perhaps a clergyman some day
Will come and carry me away."

"Oh," Margaret cried, "I hope he will,
And then they'll make you better too;
I'm sure, if he knew you were ill,
He'd bring a carriage to take you,
And some rich little lady would
Pay for your medicine and food."

Dear children, many Annies lie
Exhausted on their beds of pain;
Oh, will you let their weary cry
Be uttered every day in vain?
By little savings, could you not
Support a new "Aunt Judy's Cot?"

E. M. L.



AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



MORTIMER LIGHTWOOD.

An anonymous correspondent sends the following extract from Sir T. Herbert's "Memoirs of the Two Last Years of the Reign of King Charles I.," in answer to your last inquiry: "It is memorable that at such time as the king's body was brought out of St. George's Hall, the sky was serene and clear; but presently it began to snow, and fell so fast, as by that time they came to the west end of the Royal Chapel, the black velvet pall was all white (the colour of innocency), being thickly covered with snow. *So went the white king to his grave*, in the 48th year of his age, and the 22nd year and 10th month of his reign. Letting pass Merlyn's prophecies, some make it allude to the white satin his majesty wore when he was crowned in Westminster Abbey in the year 1625, formerly kings having on purple robes at their coronation." "Jessie L. W." gives the same reference, and adds that the idea has been paraphrased in a ballad, entitled the "White King's Burial," by W. B. B. Stevens, one verse of which runs thus:

"'Twas a rough dark winter's even as, his grandson on his knee,
Sir Humphrey watched the firelight as it flashed
and flickered free;
Now he curled his stiff mustachio, now he hummed
an olden stave,
Ere he told how went the white king from the
scaffold to the grave."

If you would like a copy of the rest of the ballad, "Jessie L. W." has kindly offered to send one. Address, "J. L. W., Field House, Abbey Wood, S.E." The line "And a feebler cheer," &c., is from Campbell's "Battle of the Baltic."

Can any of our readers answer the following questions sent by "Mortimer Lightwood?" (1) There is a Scotch air

called "General Reid's March;" in one collection of Scotch music it appeared with the words, "In the garb of old Gaul," as a second title. Who was this General Reid? (2) Where can the words of a Jacobite song be found, the air of which goes by the title of "Carlisle Yetts," or, "White was the rose in his gay bonnet," the last title being probably the first words of the song? (3) Whence are these quotations?—

"When wild and high the Camerons' gathering rose."

"Gerne, gerne,
Gedenken ja Deiner die Sterne."

"A. G." The subscriptions you inquire about were acknowledged in our August number.

"Agnes Day" has disposed of all her stamps and crests, and therefore, on receipt of a stamped envelope, will return any of the old postage stamps which our correspondents have sent her without receiving anything in exchange.

"Dolly" offers a hundred old postage stamps in exchange for five rare foreign stamps. Address, 1 Primrose Hill Road, N.W.

"F. G. Rees" will give "a nicely-worked marker (words to be chosen) for every six clean Christmas cards sent to her before December 12th." Address, East Village, Corbridge, S. Wales.

"Lola." Aunt Judy does not know the work you inquire about, but feels sure that the best way to complete it would be by making inquiries through a bookseller.

The anonymous correspondent who asks for a book suitable for a newly-confirmed girl is recommended to try Dr. Vaughan's little work on "Confirmation" (1s. or 1s. 6d. in price), or, "The

Holy Communion," by the Rev. H. W. Ridley, which costs about the same.

Aunt Judy has received three offers of stamp snakes for sale. "Una" will sell one at 7s. 6d. (address, Cottenham Rectory, Cambridge); "Nora Creina," at 6s.; and "Zoë," at 3s. 6d., all for charitable purposes.

"Zoë." Aunt Judy believes "Planchette" to be complete nonsense; but there may be people who deceive themselves and imagine it to be supernatural. She has a friend who at one time practised table-turning, and was at first deceived by the peculiar muscular action, which comes on involuntarily, and has singular results, though none which she is not confident to be due to natural causes. The transition from self-deception to deceiving others in a matter where so little is understood is easy enough. But our friend having faced the fact that he was himself the human author of all the appearances that followed, left his friends in no doubt of his opinion on the subject. And Aunt Judy thinks the contempt which he felt for table-turning may well be shared by "Planchette." The origin of kissing under the mistletoe seems to be shrouded in mystery. Some suppose that it arose from the plant being sacred to the heathen goddess of beauty; others trace it back to the time of the Druids, by whom it was held in the highest esteem.

Can our readers give "Hereahldiah" any information about the salt flowers said to grow in Polish salt mines?

"Nora Creina" asks where she can find Mrs. Hemans' "Palm Tree?" Does she refer to "the feathery palm tree," mentioned in the "Better Land?" Can any one tell her where to find the following quotations?—

"Shadows of the silver disk
Sweep the green that folds thy grave;"
and

"Judge me by what I am,
So shalt thou find me fairest."

"Mabel." Aunt Judy cannot tell you of any more likely plan of disposing of your snake than the often-recommended one of sending it to a bazaar, unless you like to exchange it through the "Queen" newspaper.

"Minerva and Venus." Aunt Judy is sorry that she cannot give any distinct information as to the origin of the *Mad Hatter*, whom Lewis Carrol has immortalized in his inimitable Tea-party. The matter was discussed in "Notes and Queries" (3rd Series, V.), but no more likely suggestion offered than that the saying arose from a perversion of the French phrase, in speaking of a weak-minded person, *Il raisonne comme une hûître*; *hûître* having gradually lapsed into *hatter*—just as the expression, "That's the cheese" was derived from "That's the thing" (*chose*).

"Ritualist." The quotation you ask for is the forty-seventh verse in Walter Scott's ballad of "William and Helen," which is to be found in any complete collection of his poems.

"Cluster Rose" asks where the lines—

"A stranger and alone,
Among that brotherhood,
The Monk Felix stood"—

come from? Aunt Judy only knows Archbishop Trench's version of the legend contained in his "Monk and the Bird."

"Cor Caroli" offers five times the number of old postage stamps for any crests, monograms, or foreign stamps, that our readers may like to exchange. Address, Miss Stephenson, Roxby, Brigg, Lincolnshire.

"A constant Reader" wishes to know where she can find the following line in Shakespeare:

"And now to dinner, with what appetite you may."

"Twilight" would feel greatly indebted to the lady who sent a reply to

the query about Kaiserswerth, if she would allow "Twilight" to communicate with her *privately* on the subject. Address with the Editor.

"Jackdaw" has a new stamp snake for sale or exchange. Open to offers. Would like a pair of skates. Address with the Editor.

"Piggie" inquires whether the eclipse in December will be visible at Hampstead? The receipt for making a stamp snake was inserted in the Correspondence of our Magazine, April, 1871.

"Busy Bee," who has for long shown a most kind and practical interest in the Children's Hospital, writes to suggest that any young ladies who feel the same should agree to set aside one evening in each week to working for the benefit of it; either making clothes for the children, or articles for sale. Aunt Judy need scarcely say how highly she would approve the establishment of such a plan. Each member to pay 6d. or 1s. on joining the Society (which might go towards the establishment of a second Aunt Judy Cot), and all names to be sent in to the Editor in January, so as to begin the good work with the New Year.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, November 15, 1871.

Little Annie H—, who has enjoyed such kind interest from the supporters of the "Aunt Judy's Cot," is still under treatment. She is so much better that she is able to be moved every day from her bed to a couch placed by the fireside. She suffers no pain, and is as happy as the day is long, always ready to laugh and play with those whom she has admitted to be chosen friends, but grave and silent to all beside. It is hoped that before another number of the Magazine appears, Annie will be well enough to leave the Hospital.

In common with all the other children she has made good use of the toys, supplied either from the general store of the Hospital, or sent especially for her. Being so young, she has not arrived at the age when children begin to reject their dumb favourites, and to prefer some domestic pet possessing life. After a time, the charm of woolly dogs with their artificial squeak, and Noah's Arks with their odd-shaped inhabitants becomes extinct: these painted imitations suffice for early years, but the passive creatures which do not think proper to die when they have their heads knocked off, and which regard the loss of a leg with supreme indifference, or quietly stand for hours where they are placed, do not satisfy the growing experience of older girls and boys, who are attracted more by the gambols of a frisky kitten, the singing of a bird, the odd utterance of a parrot, or the motion of anything possessing life.

During many years a little Skye terrier was a frequent visitor to the wards, and was the constant companion of the convalescent patients when they were out in the garden at the back of the Hospital. "Jim" was a great favourite with the children, and will long be remembered for his gentleness and forbearance under treatment not intentionally rough, but which sorely tried his patience. "Jim" used to accompany the children one by one into the wards, and, not until the door was closed upon the last one, would he leave the passage to rest in his kennel.

An aquarium containing gold and silver fish (presented by a lady for use in the convalescent day-room) excites great interest among the patients, and affords excellent material for lessons by the teacher. Merry shouts of laughter sometimes greet the little fishes, which, with open mouths and eyes, magnified by the glass sides of the aquarium, seem to be advancing direct towards the little group of observers standing around.

An anonymous donor (who is evidently a reader of "Aunt Judy's Magazine") has sent a parcel containing between sixty and seventy books, adapted for the young: very cordial thanks are offered for the welcome gift.

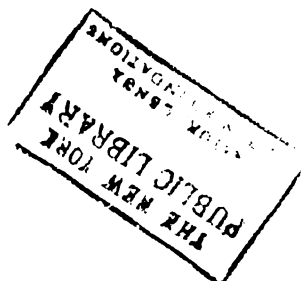
Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to November 15th, 1871.

	£	s.	d.
A. G. (monthly)	0	0	3
E. T. A. (annual)	9	5	0
Susan and Harriet, Maines House, Chirnside (monthly)	0	1	0
Mary and Katie (annual)	0	10	0
A. G. (monthly)	0	0	3
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
M. A. F. (monthly)	0	0	6
Gina	0	1	0
Helen	0	1	0
"Jackie," Thurlsbeg	0	2	6
"Poppety Pink," Jeaynes Court, Bisley	0	2	0
Maria F—, Willesden	0	0	4
Emily, South Shore, Blackpool	0	6	0
Edward and Mary, Porchester Square	0	4	0
Bess and Cog, Tetbury	0	5	0
Edith H—, Leamington.	0	2	6
Miss H. Birley, Mrs. Jones, Mal- low House, Milnthorpe, West- moreland (collected)	0	4	0
Mildred and Nina Pigou, The Vicarage, Doncaster	0	6	0
Beatrice, Leicester	0	1	0
E. W., St. Leonards	0	2	0
Block	0	0	4
"The Cheshire Cat's Child," Lea- mington	0	5	0
G. M. Gwyn, Great Marlow, Bucks	0	3	0
"From the three fish in the bay," Gosport	0	8	6
Frank, Tom, Pops, and Jet, Filey Brigg	0	10	0
Miss Wonlaw	0	1	6

	£	s.	d.
"Speedwell" (collected)	0	10	6
Scaramouch	0	1	0
R. Jessie Edwards, Spalding	0	2	0
B. M. W., Lewisham	0	5	0
H. and F. S., Nether House, Grenoside	0	2	0
Little Alice	0	1	0
Mary and Fanny, Lawnhurst, Didsbury	0	12	0
"In humble thankfulness for the preservation of a beloved son during the late awful fire at Chicago"	0	10	0
Collected by Nora Barker, Oak- dale, Sheffield—Mrs. Barker, Ellie and Lily, 3s., Alice and Edith Turner, 4d., May, Lily, Janet, Edward, Lennox, and Frank Barker, 3s., Mother, 2s. 6d., Nora Barker, 1s. 2d.	0	10	0
"A Christmas Box," Mold	0	10	0
Jeremiah Duddle, Barrington Road	0	0	3
G. S. L. (collected)	0	5	6
G. J. K. (collected), Charlie and Maud, Stanmore, 15s., Ste- phanie, 5s.	1	0	0
"Plop," 2d., Plop's sister, 2d., Loughborough	0	0	4
Miss C. Harrison, 2s. 6d., Miss F. Nicholson, 1s. 6d., Mrs. Simpson, 1s., Penrith	0	5	0
W. T. Suthery, Rev. W. T. Brown- ing, Thorpe Mandeville	0	2	6
E. P., Sevenoaks	0	2	6
Maggie Browell, Freshfield, Southampton	0	2	6
Mary Merriman, Langmore, Ted- dington	0	0	6
May Warren, 3s. 6d., Harry Percy Warren, 3d., Gracie and Katie Warren, 6d., E. L. M. Warren, 2s. 3d., and four books from H. P. W., Flixton, Bungay	0	6	6
Henry, Ernest, Lily, Maude, and Topey, The Rectory, Berkes- well, Coventry	0	5	0
L. S. W., Salisbury	0	5	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Florence Espair, Squirrel Hall, Denbighshire	0	3	0	Miss Cooper, and her nieces Emily and Elinor, with some pinafores and socks	0	4	9½
"Saucy Wee," Holloway	0	5	0	A School-girl, Mount House, Bar- ton-on-Humber	0	5	0
Berty P., Torquay	0	3	2	"Palma," a new florin, and some toys for general use	0	2	0
Fines and collections at Alwyn House, Wilmslow	0	8	0	Miss Edith Helen Bawcutt, Cedar Villa, Banbury	0	2	6
Albert and Fanny	0	2	0	The Primrose Family, Mamma, 2s., Rob's savings, 2s.	0	4	0
"A Cluster Rose," 1s., Aschen- puttel, 1s., The Mythe, Stoke Bishop	0	2	0	Ethel, Bee, and Helda, some toys and books.			
Sweep, Mischief, Nipper, and Sambo, Cliffe House	0	2	0	Anonymous, a parcel of books.			
Rough, Trot, Princess, and Pax	0	2	0	"From little Birty and little Markey, a little scrap-book for little Annie."			
Five greyhound puppies	0	0	5	Franky and Tommy, pictures, a marker and a valentine.			
Darkie, Grub, and Star, Brad- field Rectory	0	2	6	"From the nest of sparrows"— Busy Bee, a small packet of toys; Toddy Waddles, wool for making balls; Dormouse, num- bers of "The Children's Friend," and some toy books.			
A late puppy	0	0	6	M. H. Donne, six copies of the "Story of the War."			
Trouvé	0	0	6	Lily, Janie, and Harry Bailey, a parcel of toys and books.			
Fido	0	0	6				
George and Harry Hancock, Halse, Taunton	0	4	0				
Some well-wishers at Becken- ham	0	0	4				
Gina	0	0	6				
Tilly	0	1	0				
Julia C. Howlett (towards the perpetual endowment of the Cot)	0	10	0				
Ethel, Nelly, and Maud	0	10	0				







SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER I.

ELEANOR AND I.—OUR NEW FAD.—THE VICARAGE KITCHEN.



LEANOR and I are subject to *fads*. Indeed, it is a family failing. (By the family I here mean our household, for Eleanor and I are not, even distantly, related.) Life would be comparatively dull, up away here on the moors, without them. Our fads and the boys' fads are sometimes the same, but oftener distinct. Our present fad we would not so much as tell them of, on any account; because they would laugh at us. It is this. We purpose this winter to write histories of our own lives down to the present date.

It seems an egotistical, and perhaps silly thing to record the trivialities of our everyday lives, even for fun, and just to please ourselves. I said so to Eleanor, but she said, "Supposing Mr. Pepys had thought so about his everyday life, how much instruction and amusement would have been lost to the readers of his Diary." To which I replied that as Mr. Pepys lived in stirring times, and amongst notable people, *his* daily life was like a leaf out of English history, and his case quite different to the case of obscure persons living simply and monotonously on the Yorkshire moors. On which Eleanor observed that the simple and truthful history of a single mind from childhood would be more valuable, if it could be got, than the whole of Mr. Pepys' Diary from the first volume to the last. And when Eleanor makes a general observation of this kind in her conclusive tones, I very seldom dispute it; for, to begin with, she is generally right, and then she is so much more clever than I. One result of the confessed superiority of her opinion to mine is that I give way to it sometimes even when I am not quite convinced, but only helped by a little weak-minded reason of my own in the background. I gave way in this instance, not altogether to her argument (for I am sure *my* biography will not be the history of a mind, but only a record of small facts interesting to no one but myself), but chiefly because I think as one grows up one quite enjoys recalling the things that

happened when one was little. And one forgets them so soon! I envy Eleanor for having kept her childish diaries. I used to write diaries too, but, when I was fourteen years old, I got so much ashamed of them (it made me quite hot to read my small moral reflections, and the pompous account of my quarrel with Matilda, my sentimental admiration for the handsome bandmaster, &c., even when alone), and I was so afraid of the boys getting hold of them, that I made a big hole in the kitchen fire one day, and burned them all. At least, so I thought; but one volume escaped the flames, and the fun Eleanor and I have now in re-reading this has made me regret that I burned the others. Of course, even if I put down all that I can remember, it will not be like having kept my diaries. Eleanor's life, in this respect, will be much better than mine: but still, I remember a good deal now that I daresay I shall forget soon, and in sixteen more years these histories may amuse us as much as the old diaries. We are all growing up now. We have even got to speaking of "old times," by which we mean, the times when we used to wade in the brooks, and——

But this is beside the mark, and I must not allow myself to wander off. I am too apt to be discursive. When I had to write leading articles for our manuscript periodical, Jack used to laugh at me, and say, "If it wasn't for Eleanor whipping you up, you'd put parenthesis within parenthesis till, when you got yourself into the very inside one, you'd be as puzzled as a pig in a labyrinth, and not know how to get back to where you started from." And I remember Clement—who generally disputed a point, if possible—said, "How do you know she wouldn't get back, if you let her work out each train of thought in peace? The curt, clean-cut French style may suit some people whose brains won't stretch far without getting tired; but others may have more sympathy with a Semitic cast of mind." This excuse pleased me very much. It was pleasanter to believe that my style was Semitic, than to allow, with Jack, that it tended towards that of Mrs. Nickleby. Though at that time my notion of the meaning of the word Semitic was not so precise as I could have wished.

Our home is a beautiful place in the summer, and in much of spring and autumn. In winter I fancy it would look dreary to the eyes of strangers. At night the wind comes over the top of Dead-

manstone Hill, and down the valley, whirls the last leaves off the old trees by the church, and sends them dancing over the closely-ranged gravestones. Then up through the village it comes, and moans round our house all night, like some miserable being wanting to get in. The boys say it does get in, more than enough, especially into their bedrooms; but then boys always grumble. It certainly makes strange noises here. I have more than once opened the back door late in the evening, because I fancied that one of the dogs had been hurt, and was groaning outside. That stormy winter after the Ladybrig murder our fancies and the wind together played Eleanor and me sad tricks. When once we began to listen we seemed to hear a whole tragedy going on close outside. We could distinguish footsteps and voices through the bluster, and then a struggle in the shrubbery, and a *thud*, and a groan, and then a roar of wind, half drowning the sound of flying footsteps—and then an awful pause, and at last faint groaning, and a bump, as of some poor wounded body falling against the house. At this point we were wont to summon courage and rush out, with the kitchen poker and a candle, shapeless with tallow shrouds from the strong draughts. We never could see anything; partly, perhaps, because the candle was always blown out; and when we stood outside it became evident that what we had heard was only the wind, and a bough of the old acacia-tree, which beat at intervals upon the house.

When the nights are stormy, there is no room so comfortable as the big kitchen. We used it first for parochial purposes, small night schools, and so forth. Then one evening, as we strolled in to look for one of the dogs, the cook said, "You can sit here, if you like, Miss Eleanor. *We* always sits in the pantry on winter nights; so there'll be no one to disturb you." And as we had some writing on hand which we did not wish to have discussed or overlooked by other members of the family, we settled down in great peace and comfort by the roaring fire which the maids had heaped to keep the kitchen warm in their absence. We found ourselves so cosy and independent that we returned again and again to our new study. The boys (who go away a great deal more than we do, and are apt to come back dissatisfied with our "ways," and anxious to make us more "like other people,") object strongly to this habit of ours. They say, "Whoever *heard* of ladies sitting in the kitchen?" And, indeed, there

are not many south country kitchens in which I should like to sit. But we have this large, airy, spotlessly clean room, with its stone floor, its yellow-washed walls, its tables scrubbed to snowy whiteness, its quaint old dresser, and clock, and corner cupboards of shiny black oak, and its huge fireplace and blazing fire all to ourselves, and we have abundance of room, and may do anything we please, so I think it is no wonder that we like it, though it be, in point of fact, a kitchen. We cover the table, and (commonly) part of the floor, with an amount of books, papers, and belongings of various sorts, such as we should scruple to deluge the drawing-room with. The fire crackles and blazes, so that we do not mind the wind, though there are no blinds to the kitchen, and if we do not "cotter" the shutters, we look out upon the black night, and the tall Scotch pine that has been tossed so wildly for so many years, and is not torn down yet.

Keziah the cook takes much pride in this same kitchen, which partly accounts for its being in a state so suitable to our use. She "stones" the floor with excruciating regularity. (At least, some people hate the scraping sound. I do not mind it myself). She "pot-moulds" the hearth in fantastic patterns; the chests, the old chairs, the settle, the dresser, the clock and the corner cupboards are so many mirrors from constant polishing. She says, with justice, that "a body might eat his dinner off anything in the place."

We dine early, and the cooking for the late supper is performed in what we call "the second kitchen," beyond this. I believe that what is now the Vicarage was originally an old farmhouse, of which this same charming kitchen was the chief "living-room." It is quite a journey, through long, low passages, to get from the modern part of the house to this. One year, when the "languages fad" was strong upon us, Eleanor and I earned many a backache by carrying the huge volumes of the *Della Crusca* Italian dictionary from the dining-room shelves to the kitchen. We piled them on the oak chest for reference, and ran backwards and forwards to them from the table where we sate, and beat our brains over the "*Divina Commedia*," while the wind growled in the box-trees without, and the dogs growled in dreams upon the hearth.

It is by this well-scrubbed table, in this kitchen, that our biographies are to be written. They cannot be penned under the noses of the boys.

Eleanor finds rocking a help to composition, and she is swinging backwards and forwards in the glossy old rocking-chair, with a pen

between her lips, and a vacant gaze in her eyes, that assumes almost a look of inspiration when the swing of the chair turns her face towards the ceiling. For my own part I find that I can meet the crisis of a train of ideas best upon my feet, so I pace up and down past the old black dresser, with its gleaming crockery, like a captain on his quarter-deck. Suddenly Eleanor's chair stands still.

"Margery," she says, laying her head upon the table at her side, "I do think this is a capital idea."

"Yours will be capital," I reply, pausing also, and leaning back against the dresser; "for you have kept your old diaries, and——"

"My dear Margery, what if I have kept my old diaries? I've lived in this place my whole life. Now you have had some adventures! I quite look forward to reading your life, Margery. You have no idea what pleasure it gives me to think of it. I was thinking just now, if ever we are separated in life, how I shall enjoy looking over it again and again. You must give me yours, you know, and I will give you mine. Yes, I am very glad we thought of it." And Eleanor begins to rock once more, and I resume my march.

But this quite settles the matter in my mind. To please Eleanor I would try to do a great deal; much more than this. I will write my autobiography.

Though it seems rather (to use the Quakers' expressive term) a "need-not" to provide for our being separated in life, when we have so firmly resolved to be old maids, and to live together all our lives in the little whitewashed cottage behind the church.

CHAPTER II.

MY PRETTY MOTHER.—AYAH.—COMPANY.

My name is Margaret Vandaleur. My father was a captain in Her Majesty's 202nd Regiment of foot. The regiment was in India for six years, just after I was born; indeed I was not many months old when I made my first voyage, which, I fancy, Eleanor is partly thinking of when she says that I have had some adventures.

Military ladies are said to be often unlucky as to the times when they have to change stations; the move often chancing at an inconvenient moment. And my mother had to make her first voyage with the cares of a young baby on her hands. Nominally, at any rate; but I

think the chief care of me fell upon our Ayah. My mother hired her in England. The Ayah wished to return to her country, and was glad to do so as my nurse. I think that at first she only intended to be with us for the voyage, but she stayed on, and became fond of me, and so remained my nurse as long as I was in India.

I have heard that my mother was the prettiest woman on board the vessel she went out in, and the prettiest woman at the station when she got there. Some people have told me that she was the prettiest woman they ever saw. She was just eighteen years old when my father married her, and she was not six-and-twenty when she died.

[I got so far in writing my life, seated at the round, three-legged pinewood table, with Eleanor scribbling away opposite to me. But I could get no further just then. I put my hands before my eyes as if to shade them from the light, but Eleanor is very quick, and she found out that I was crying. She jumped up and threw herself at my feet.

"Margery, dear Margery! what *is* the matter?" I could only sob "My mother, oh, my mother!" and add, almost bitterly, "It is very well for you to write about your childhood who have had a mother—and such a mother!—all your life; but for me——!"

Eleanor knelt straight up, with her teeth set, and her hands clasped before her.

"I do think," she said slowly, "that I am, without exception, the most selfish, inconsiderate, dense, unfeeling brute that ever lived." She looked so quaintly, vehemently in earnest as she knelt in the firelight, that I laughed in spite of my tears. "My dear old thing," I said, "it is I who am selfish, not you. But I am going on now, and I promise to disturb you no more." And in this I was resolute, though Eleanor would have burned our papers then and there, if I had not prevented her.

Indeed she knew as well as I did that it was not merely because I was an orphan that I wept, as I thought of my early childhood. We could not speak of it, but she knew enough to guess at what was passing through my mind. I was only six years old when my mother died, but I can remember her. I can remember her brief appearances in the room where I played, in much dirt and contentment, at my Ayah's feet, rustling in silks and satins, glittering with costly ornaments, beautiful and scented, like a fairy dream. I would forego all these visions for one—only one memory of her praying by my

bedside, or teaching me at her knee. But she was so young, and oh ! so pretty ! And yet, ah ! mother, mother ! Better than all the triumphs of your loveliness in its too short prime would it have been to have left a memory of your beautiful face with some devout or earnest look upon it—"as it had been the face of an angel"—to your only child.

As I sit thinking thus, I find Eleanor's dark eyes gazing at me from her place, to which she has gone back ; and she says softly, "Margery, dear Margery, do let us give it up." But I would not give it up now, for anything whatever.]

The first six years of my life were spent chiefly with my Ayah. I loved her very dearly. I kissed and fondled her dark cheeks as gladly as if they had been fair and ruddy, and oftener than I touched my mother's, which were like the petals of a china rose. My most intimate friends were of the Ayah's complexion. We had more than one "bearer" during those years, to whom I was greatly attached. I spoke more Hindostanee than English. The other day I saw a group of Hindoo sailors at the Southampton Station ; they had just come off a ship, and were talking rapidly and softly together. I have forgotten the language of my early childhood, but its tones had a familiar sound ; those dark bright faces were like the faces of old friends, and my heart beat for a minute as one is moved by some remembrance of an old home.

When my mother went out for her early ride, at daylight, before the heat of the day came on, Ayah would hold me up at the window to see her start. Sometimes my father would have me brought out, and take me before him on his horse for a few minutes. But my nurse never allowed this if a ready excuse could prevent it. Her care of me was maternal in its tenderness, but she did not keep me tidy enough for me to be presentable off-hand to company.

There was always "company" wherever my mother went ; gentleman-company especially. The gentlemen, in different places, and at different times, were not the same, but they had a strong general likeness. I used to count them when they rode home with my father and mother, or assembled for any of the many reasons for which "company" hung about our homes. I remember that it was an amusement to me to discover, "there are six to-day," or "five to-day," and to tell my Ayah. I was even more minute. I divided them into

three classes; "the little ones, the middle ones, and the old ones." The "little ones" were the very young men, beardless ensigns &c.; the "old ones" were usually colonels, generals, or elderly civilians. The "little ones" and the "old ones" were the most courteous; a self-content, that sometimes bordered upon insolence, was apt to distinguish the manners of the "middle ones."

When callers came, I was often sent into the drawing-room. Great was my dear Ayah's pride when I was dressed in pink silk, my hair being arranged in ringlets round my head, to be shown off to the company. I was proud of myself, and was wont rather to strut into the room upon my best kid shoes. They were pink, to match my frock, and I was not a little vain of them. There were usually some ladies in the room, dressed in rustling finery like my mother, but not like her in the face—never so pretty. There were always plenty of gentlemen of the three degrees, and they used to be very polite to me, and to call me "little Rosebud," and give me sweetmeats. I liked sweetmeats, and I liked flattery, but I had an affection stronger than my fancy for either. I used to look sharply over the assembled men for the face I wanted, and when I had found it I flew to the arms that were soon stretched out for me. They were my father's.

I remember my mother, but I remember my father better still. I did not see very much of him, but when we were together I think we were both thoroughly happy. I can recall pretty clearly one very happy time we spent together. My father got some leave, and took us for a short time to the hills. My clearest memory of his face is as it smiled on me, from under a broad hat, as we made nosegays for mamma's vases in our beautiful garden, where the fuchsias and geraniums were "hardy," and the sweet-scented verbenas and heliotropes were great big bushes, that loaded the air with perfume. I have only one clearer remembrance of it—the last.

CHAPTER III.

THE CHOLERA SEASON.—MY MOTHER GOES AWAY.—MY SIXTH BIRTHDAY.

We were living in a bungalow not far from the barracks at X. when the cholera came. It was when I was within a few weeks of six years old. First we heard that it was among the natives, and the matter did not excite much notice. Then it broke out among the men, and

the officers talked a good deal about it. The next news was of the death of the colonel commanding our regiment.

One of my early recollections is of our hearing of this. An ensign of our regiment (one of the "little ones") called upon my mother in the evening of the day of the colonel's death. He was very white, very nervous, very restless. He brought us the news. The colonel had been ill barely thirty-six hours. He had suffered agonies, with wonderful firmness. He was to be buried the next day. "He never was afraid of cholera," said Mr. Gordon; "he didn't believe it was infectious; he thought keeping up the men's spirits was everything. But, you see, it isn't nervousness, after all, that does it."

"It goes a long way, Gordon," said my father. "You're young; you've never been through one of these seasons. Don't get fanciful, my good fellow. Come here, and play with Margery." Mr. Gordon laughed.

"I am a fool, certainly," he said. "Ever since I heard of it, I have fancied a strange, faint kind of smell everywhere, which is absurd enough."

"I will make you a camphor bag," said my mother, "that ought to overpower any faint smell, and it is a charm against infection."

I believe Mr. Gordon was beginning to thank her, but his words ended in a sort of inarticulate groan. He stood on his feet, though not upright, and at last said feebly, "I beg your pardon, I don't feel quite well."

"You're upset, old fellow; it's quite natural," said my father. "Come and get some brandy, and you shall come back for the camphor."

My father led him away, but he did not come back. My father took him to his quarters, and sent the surgeon to him; and my mother took me on her knee, and sat silent for a long time, with the unfinished camphor bag beside her.

The next day I went to the end of our compound with Ayah, to see the colonel's funeral pass. The procession seemed endless. The horse he had ridden two days before by my mother's side tossed its head fretfully, as the Dead March wailed, and the slow tramp of feet poured endlessly on. My mother was looking out from the verandah. As Ayah and I joined her, a native servant, who was bringing something in, said abruptly, "Sahib Gordon—he dead too."

When my father returned from the funeral he found my mother in a

panic. Some friends had lately invited her to stay with them, and she was now resolved to go. "I am sure I shall die if I stay here!" she cried, and it ended in her going away at once. There was some difficulty as to accommodating me and Ayah, and it was decided that, if necessary, we should follow my mother later.

For my own part, I begged to remain. I had no fear of cholera, and I was anxious to dine with my father on my birthday, as he had promised that I should.

It was on the day before my birthday that one of the surgeons was buried. The man next in rank to the poor colonel was on leave, and the regiment was commanded by our friend Major Buller, whose little daughters were invited to spend the following evening with me. The major, my father, and two other officers had been pall-bearers at the funeral. My father came to me on his return. He was slightly chilled, and said he should remain indoors; so I had him all to myself, and we were very happy, though he complained of fatigue, and fell asleep once on the floor with his head in my lap. He was still lying on the floor when Ayah took me to bed. I believe he had been unwell all the day, though I did not know it, and had been taking one of the many specifics against cholera, of which everybody had one or more at that time.

Half-an-hour later he sent for a surgeon, who happened to be dining with Major Buller. The doctor and the major came together to our bungalow, and with them two other officers who happened to be of the party, and who were friends of my father. One of them was a particular friend of my own. He was an ensign, a reckless, kind-hearted lad "in his teens," a Mr. Abercrombie, who had good reason to count my father as a friend.

Mr. Abercrombie mingled in some way with my dreams that night, or rather early morning, and when I fairly woke, it was to the end of a discussion betwixt my Ayah, who was crying, and Mr. Abercrombie, in evening dress, whose face bore traces of what looked to me like crying also. I was hastily clothed, and he took me in his arms.

"Papa wants you, Margery dear," he said; and he carried me quickly down the passages in the dim light of the early summer dawn.

Two or three officers, amongst whom I recognised Major Buller, fell back as we came in, from the bed to which Mr. Abercrombie carried me. My father turned his face eagerly towards me, but I shrank away.

That one night of suffering and collapse had changed him so that I did not know him again. At last I was persuaded to go to him, and by his voice and manner recognized him as his feeble fingers played tenderly with mine. And when he said, "Kiss me, Margery dear," I crept up and kissed his forehead, and started to feel it so cold and damp.

"Be a good girl, Margery dear," he whispered; "be very good to mamma." There was a short silence. Then he said, "Is the sun rising yet, Buller?"

"Just rising, old fellow. Does the light bother you?"

"No, thank you, I can't see it. The fact is, I can't see you now. I suppose it's nearly over. God's will be done. You've got the papers, Buller? Arkwright will be kind about it, I'm sure. You'll break it to my wife as well as you can?"

After another pause he said, "It's time you fellows went to bed and got some sleep."

But no one moved, and there was another silence, which my father broke by saying, "Buller, where are you? It's quite dark now. Would you say the Lord's Prayer for me, old fellow? Margery dear, put your hands with poor papa's."

"I've not said my prayers yet," said I; "and you know I ought to say my prayers, for I've been dressed a long time."

The major knelt simply by the bed. The other men, standing, bent their heads, and Mr. Abercrombie, kneeling, buried his face on the end of the bed and sobbed aloud.

Major Buller said the Lord's Prayer. I, believing it to be my duty, said it also, and my father said it with us to the clause "For thine is the kingdom, the power, and the glory," when his voice failed, and I, thinking he had forgotten (for I sometimes forgot in the middle of my most familiar prayers and hymns), helped him—"Papa dear! *for ever and ever.*"

Still he was silent, and as I bent over him I heard one long-drawn breath, and then his hands, which were enfolded with mine, fell apart. The sunshine was now beginning to catch objects in the room, and a ray lighted up my father's face, and showed a change that even I could see. An officer standing at the head of the bed saw it also, and said abruptly, "He's dead, Buller." And the major, starting up, took me in his arms, and carried me away.

I cried and struggled. I had a dim sense of what had happened, mixed with an idea that these men were separating me from my father. I could not be pacified till Mr. Abercrombie held out his arms for me. He was more like a woman, and he was crying as well as I. I went to him and buried my sobs on his shoulder. Mr. George (as I had long called him, from finding his surname hard to utter) carried me into the passage and walked up and down, comforting me.

"Is papa really dead?" I at length found voice to ask.

"Yes, Margery dear. I'm so sorry."

"Will he go to Abraham's bosom, Mr. George?"

"Will he go *where*, Margery?"

"To Abraham's bosom, you know, where the poor beggar went that's lying on the steps in my Sunday picture-book, playing with those dear old dogs."

Mr. Abercrombie's knowledge of Holy Scripture was, I fear, limited. Possibly my remarks recalled some childish remembrance similar to my own. He said, "Oh, yes, to be sure. Yes, dear."

"Do you think the dogs went with the poor beggar?" I asked. "Do you think the angels took them too?"

"I don't know," said Mr. George. "I hope they did."

There was a pause, and then I asked, in awe-struck tones, "Will the angels fetch papa, do you think?"

Mr. George had evidently decided to follow my theological lead, and he replied, "Yes, Margery dear."

"Shall you see them?" I asked.

"No, no, Margery. I'm not good enough to see angels."

"I think you're very good," said I. "And please be good, Mr. George, and then the angels will fetch you, and perhaps me, and mamma, and perhaps Ayah, and perhaps Bustle, and perhaps Clive." Bustle was Mr. Abercrombie's dog, and Clive was a mastiff, the dog of the regiment, and a personal friend of mine.

"Very well, Margery dear. And now you must be good too, and you must let me take you to bed, for it's morning now, and I have had no sleep at all."

"Is it to-morrow now?" I asked; "because, if it's to-morrow now, it's my birthday." And I began to cry afresh, because papa had promised that I should dine with him, and had promised me a present also.

"I'll give you a birthday present," said my long-suffering friend; and

he began to unfasten a locket that hung at his watch-chain. It was of Indian gold, with forget-me-nots in turquoise stones upon it. He opened it and pulled out a photograph, which he tore to bits, and then trampled underfoot.

"There, Margery, there's a locket for you; you can throw it into the fire, or do anything you like with it. And I wish you many happy returns of the day." And he finally fastened it round my neck with his Trichinopoli watch-chain, leaving his watch loose in his waistcoat pocket. The locket and chain pleased me, and I suffered him to carry me to bed. Then, as he was parting from me, I thought of my father again, and asked—

"Do you think the angels have fetched papa *now*, Mr. George?"

"I think they have, Margery."

Whereupon I cried myself to sleep. And this was my sixth birthday.

(*To be continued.*)

IVY-LEAVES.



STONE'S throw from the highway

The little cottage stands;

A garden lies before it,

Behind it, meadow lands.

And over all the whitewashed walls

The creeping ivy flings

Her strong green branches, where the thrush

His merry carol sings.

And round a latticed window

The clasping tendrils spread,

And throw their flick'ring shadows

Across the small white bed

Where little May lies musing,

With careless, childish grace,

While the rosy glow of sunset

Lights up her happy face.

What is it May is dreaming

As she lies there all alone?

Is she thinking of the garden

That she calls her "very own?"

Is she thinking of her rose-tree,
 With its little buds of white,
 And wondering if those tiny gems
 Will open in the night?

Is she thinking of her dolly?
 Of her chickens, or her bees?
 Of gambols in the hay-field?
 No! May dreams of none of these.
 She's listening to the whispering sound
 Made by the ivy-leaves,
 As the light breeze gently stirs them
 Beneath the cottage eaves.

For her the leaves have voices:
 And now, to-night, they tell
 Of little fairies dwelling
 In rose or lily bell.
 She fancies that the pattering sound
 Must be their footfalls light,
 Dancing across the ivy-leaves
 And starry jasmine white.

And as she lies there dreaming
 The rosy cloud-tints die,
 And soft and bright the evening star
 Steals up the twilight sky;
 The room grows darker—Mary sleeps—
 Yet, half-unconscious, feels
 Her mother's latest good-night kiss,
 And in her dreams there steals

A deeper, higher beauty:
 She sees the angel bright,
 Her mother told her, God had sent
 To guard her through the night;
 She hears her mother's evening psalm,
 And dreams the angel sings;
 While the murmur in the ivy
 Is the rustle of his wings.

* * * * *
 Years pass away:—the ivy
 Still clothes the cottage wall;
 Still weaves around that window
 The thickest screen of all;

Still stirs, with gentle murmuring sound,
 As the light breeze sweeps by;
 And Mary, listening, still dreams on,
 Beneath the evening sky.

She dreams no more of fairies
 Dancing in moonlight clear;
 Her happy smile is summoned
 By thoughts more glad and dear;
 The rosy colour on her cheek
 Is now no sunset glow,
 As she gazes from her window
 On the garden spread below.

A new bright hope is springing
 In Mary's heart to-day,
 So sweet, her life from henceforth
 Seems joyous, smooth and gay.
 One whom she loves most dearly
 Has claimed her for his own;
 And in the whisper of the leaves
 She hears his low fond tone.

* * * * *

Again the years have fled,ed,
 And Mary sits alone,
 Listening, as round the cottage
 The fitful night winds moan,
 As they dash the sprays of ivy
 Against the window pane,
 And shriek along the passages,
 And howl and sob again.

And to her saddened fancy
 The creaking ivy speaks
 Cold-hearted words and dreary,
 While the tempest roars and shrieks:
 It tells her how her husband lies
 Beneath the stormy sea,
 And that her future life, all dark,
 All full of care must be.

It tells her of her mother,
 Worn out with grief and pain;
 And of the two dear children
 She ne'er may see again.

"And can you still believe and trust?"
The mocking accents say;
"Can *love* have sent such bitter griefs,
And torn your joys away?"

It was her hour of darkness;
But ah! it took its flight,
When, falling on her trembling knees,
She strove to pray aright.
"Lord, I believe," she cried aloud,
"The love Thy Scriptures tell;
Teach me to *feel* as well as *know*
Thou doest all things well."


And even as she prayed
Her heart grew calm again,
And fast her tears were dropping
A soft refreshing rain.
The shadow of returning peace
Came stealing o'er her soul,
And brighter showed the pathway
Towards the Heavenly goal.

And Mary cried, triumphant,
"O, faithless ivy-leaves!
My heart, though crushed and bleeding,
Still loves and still believes.
My earthly joys are faded all,
My life in shadow lies,
Yet still I know, o'er all my grief,
The Day-star will arise."

Worn out with all her sorrow,
She fell asleep at last;
The storm had ceased, and o'er her bed
The moon's soft beams were cast;
And, as in happy times gone by,
Her dreams were sweet and calm,
While in her ears there rang again
Her mother's evening psalm.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER I.

T was three days since Harry had closed his "Student's Hume" with a bang, and given three cheers for *doing nothing at all*; three days since Maud had put away her drawing board, with a sigh of satisfaction that for three weeks to come she need make no more hopeless efforts to do justice to the languid brow and wavy hair of the plaster "Clytie," whose classic beauty had, during the last month, nearly driven her to despair; three days since Jack had tossed his "Colenso" to the top of the schoolroom bookcase, dashed through the house with much slamming of doors, turned head over heels on the kitchen floor, and announced to Mrs. Davy, the cook, his intention of personally superintending the preparation of a large supply of mincepies and Christmas cakes; three days since Mabel had whispered to Miss Burn that, "though it would be very nice to play with dolls all day long, she was very, very sorry that her darling Burny was going away." It was, in short, three days since the Christmas holidays had begun; only three days, and yet (how shall I tell it?) all the children excepting Mabel were standing disconsolately by the schoolroom window, looking out upon the darkness of a cold December evening, and agreeing that Everton at Christmas-time was the dullest place in England. As they knew next to nothing of any other place in England, they may, perhaps, be justly reproached with over-haste in coming to this rather wide conclusion; be that, however, as it may, you will, at all events, not wonder at their low spirits when you learn how the three days had passed.

The cheers, somersaults, and other joyful demonstrations had taken place on the afternoon of Tuesday, the 17th of December; on Wednesday morning Harry had driven Miss Burn and her box to the railway station, taken her ticket, packed her comfortably into the London train (trying the while not to look too glad to get rid of her), and, when the engine had given its last screech and puff, and Miss Burn her last nod and smile, had turned on his heel, whistled

"Champagne Charley," clattered down the station steps, jumped into what he called his "trap," though it was better known at home as "mamma's pony carriage," tossed sixpence to the boy who had been minding the pony, and set off home at a pace which, had he attempted it on his way to, instead of from, the station, would probably have frightened Miss Burn out of her senses, and jolted her box out of the narrow back seat.

But though Harry drives rather faster than is perhaps quite consistent with the safety of his own and the pony's bones, as Everton Hall stands at a distance of three miles and a half from the railway station, I may have time to tell you something about himself and his brother and sisters while he is getting home.

Their Christian names you know already; Maud, Harry, Jack, or rather John, and Mabel; their surname was Vernon, and their ages were respectively fourteen, thirteen, eleven, and five. They had all been born in India, and there they had lived till two years ago, when Colonel Vernon, whose health had long been failing, yielded at last to the persuasions of his wife and his doctor, retired from the army, and came home to settle among the lovely hills and valleys of his native county of Devonshire. Everton Hall happened at that moment to be for sale; it was a quaint old place that had belonged formerly to a distant branch of the Vernon family, and where Colonel Vernon had often stayed in his boyhood. When, therefore, on his return from India he saw it advertised for sale, he at once proposed to his wife that they should go down and look at it. They went, and fell in love with it on the spot; or I should rather say that Colonel Vernon was in love with it already for old lang syne, and that Mrs. Vernon fell in love with it, as she did with everything that her husband was fond of. So Colonel Vernon bought the old Hall, and began without delay to repair the house and improve the grounds. But four months after the family had taken possession, and when they were just beginning to feel settled, the colonel fell a victim to diphtheria, and Mrs. Vernon was a widow, and her children orphans.

Mrs. Vernon had never been remarkable for strength, either of body or mind, and her constitutional weakness and helplessness had been rather increased by her Indian life. She had been passionately attached to her husband, to whom she had been married at seventeen, and from the moment that she realized his death all her interest in

life was gone. With him she had read, and sketched, and played, and sung; henceforth books, paint-box, and pianoforte became alike distasteful to her. It is true she was very fond of her children, and though often inclined to be over-anxious about them, she had till now laughed, and talked, and played with them almost as if she were one of themselves. But now all was changed; the nervous anxiety remained, but the spirits that had made her seem a merry sister as much as a careful mother were gone, it seemed, for ever; and her affection showed itself chiefly in perpetual fears lest they should break their necks, arms, and legs in romping, or go out with insufficient wraps and catch their death of cold, or burn themselves to death by careless use of matches. She kissed them all tenderly every night and morning; she held long talks with Miss Burn about their education, and she spent many sleepless nights in forming plans for their future good. But to have her children much with her was out of the question; her health would not stand it. So she spent the greater part of most days in her room with headaches and heart-aches, and rarely saw the children at all, except at meal-times, and during an hour in the evening which they regularly spent in her sitting-room. They, on their side, came to regard their mother with more of pity than affection. She was so pale and slight, so sad and suffering, that the contrast with their own young health and spirits almost awed them; they hushed their voices in her darkened room, and trod softly when they passed her door. Somehow, the sorrow that had fallen upon the house was like a barrier separating them from her. They could no longer feel at ease in her presence; she could not enter into their pursuits, and they, though they often wished to do so, dared not speak to her of their father. At meal-times they talked in undertones among themselves, while Miss Burn exchanged remarks on the weather and other commonplace topics with Mrs. Vernon; and the evening hour spent in their mother's room was secretly felt by them all to be the weariest of the twenty-four.

Happily for the young Vernons, whose life would have been otherwise too dull for endurance, Miss Burn was a bright sensible person, with plenty of interests of her own, in which, however, she was not too much engrossed to be able to sympathize freely with those of other people; she made their lessons interesting to them, joined pleasantly in their amusements, and bore Harry's practical

jokes with imperturbable good-humour; though she could draw a sharp line between fun and impertinence, which line she never allowed him to cross. I think I need hardly add that they were all heartily fond of her.

Perhaps you wonder that the Vernons, having such a pleasant governess, should be so glad to get rid of her, and I admit that it was absurdly inconsistent of them; but you see there is a magic in the word *holidays* that drives reason and consistency quite out of the minds of most of us. It is so delightful (in prospect, at any rate) to be entirely one's own master for three whole weeks; to have no lessons to learn and no exercises to write; to lie in bed till half-past eight instead of getting up at seven; to make toffee on the school-room fire, and as much litter as one likes on the schoolroom table—that I am not sure whether, after all, the really unreasonable thing is not to expect common sense and consistency from boys and girls whose heads are full of such enchanting anticipations; above all, when it has been freezing hard for two days, and the ice is getting strong on the pond, and the gardener has said that it really ought to bear to-morrow.

But we must return to Harry. He got home safely, drove the pony carriage into the stable yard, threw the reins to the stable boy, ran round to the pond, tapped the ice knowingly with his stick in several places till he had satisfied himself that it not only ought, but would, bear to-morrow; appealed, not in vain, to the gardener for confirmation of his opinion; strolled into the house to communicate the result of his observations to Maud and Jack, and then made a raid upon a dark cupboard in the hall where sundry pairs of skates had been lying stowed away since last winter among the old cloaks, sticks, and various indescribably useless and dusty articles which collect, in obedience, I suppose, to some hidden law of nature, in the cupboards of all country houses. The afternoon was spent in walking to Dollington, to inquire the price of new skates, which turned out to be extravagantly beyond the funds of the would-be purchasers, in putting the old ones in repair, and in running backwards and forwards to the pond "to look after the ice;" and the evening, in confident expectation of plenty of fun to-morrow.

But with to-morrow came a drizzling rain. Mrs. Vernon had an unusually bad headache, and the children breakfasted by them-

selves. Maud made very strong tea, and the boys profited by their liberty to eat more eggs and cold beef than was good for them, while Mabel brought down her favourite doll and set it up on a high chair by her side. The delights of freedom quite made up for the disagreeable rain, which, moreover, was not going to last, at least so Harry said, and that so confidently that it was impossible to doubt that he had private and authentic information on the subject; the ice would be all the jollier for it in the end—again I am quoting Harry;—and in the meantime they would make toffee, play battledore and shuttlecock, and “have their own way” to their hearts’ content. They had their own way all the morning, and found it very pleasant, and, as the rain was perverse and did not stop, there was nothing for it but to have their own way again all the afternoon. But it seemed that, somehow, they had got tired of their own way. They had played at battledore and shuttlecock till their arms ached, the toffee they had made in the morning was all eaten, and though it had been excellent toffee, it struck Harry and Maud that to set to work, as Jack proposed, to make more, might be rather slow. They sat looking at one another, waiting for inspiration. The clock struck three; Maud yawned, Harry stretched himself, and Jack remarked very truly that he had made one suggestion, and it was somebody else’s turn next; upon which there was silence again for some minutes. At last, Maud, getting desperate, said, “Let us go and see Cousin Frank.”

“Through the rain?”

“Why not? It won’t hurt you and Jack, at all events, and I can wrap myself up so as to satisfy even mamma.”

“Whew!” whistled Jack.

“No harm in trying, but——” said Harry. Evidently neither of them shared Maud’s confidence.

“It is impossible that I should come with you,” said Mabel, from the corner, in a very important tone; “Rosa is not well, and I must read to her. But you needn’t mind me; I shall be very glad to have the house to myself, and the doctor has ordered her to be kept quiet.”

This was satisfactory. To say truth, Mabel had been forgotten by the other three, and when her voice first reminded Maud of her existence, she reproached herself for having proposed a plan which, though very pleasant and perhaps harmless to herself, could certainly

not include her more delicate younger sister. Mabel lived very much in a world of her own; a world peopled by dolls and creatures of the little girl's imagination. Her dolls were at least as real to her as her brothers and sisters, and neglect of her duty to Rosa would have cost her as genuine self-reproach as an act of disobedience towards her mother.

The elder children smiled at the little woman's interpellation, and fell into another five minutes' silence, during which Harry poked two holes in the carpet, and Jack counted the raindrops on the window. "Well," said Maud, "I will go and get ready."

In a very few minutes she had equipped herself from top to toe in waterproof, and was knocking at her mother's door.

"Come in" said a languid voice, and Maud went in. Mrs. Vernon's head was unusually bad, and her room in consequence more than usually dark. Maud said a few words of affectionate pity, and her mother thanked her wearily; then there was a pause, during which Maud began to feel less confident of being able to persuade her mother to let her go out in the rain. Mrs. Vernon was lying on the sofa with her eyes shut; she could not bear the light on them. Maud wondered how such scant rays as could steal through the closed blinds and shutters could hurt the weakest eyes, but she said nothing. What could she say? she could think of no service to offer to render her mother, of no further inquiry to make about her health, and she did not like to begin about the walk for fear of seeming selfishly taken up with her own pleasures. If her mother would only open her eyes and notice her cloak and umbrella, and open the subject by asking if she was going out! She waited a minute—her mother's eyes remained closed. Then she coughed slightly, and this measure had the desired effect, that is, the effect immediately desired, for Mrs. Vernon, always nervously awake to any symptoms of cold or cough, looked up uneasily.

"Have you got a cough, my love?" This was not a happy beginning.

"Oh dear no! mamma." But unfortunately the forced cough had produced a slight hoarseness which, though only momentary, did not escape Mrs. Vernon's notice. It was clearly all up with the walk.

"But you *have* got a cold, Maud, and you are hoarse. Pray take care of yourself; at this time of year sore throats are very prevalent, and very dangerous." Mrs. Vernon dropped her voice sadly, and Maud

knew that she was thinking of the fatal sore throat of two years ago; she hated herself for having awakened painful recollections, and hastened to make amends by expressing her readiness to do anything her mother wished, to cure this imaginary cold, if only she would



make her mind easy about her. But this was the very last thing Mrs. Vernon would do. In vain her daughter assured her, in a voice now perfectly free from hoarseness, that she had never felt better in her life; her fears once roused were not soon to be quieted. She went on :

"You have all the signs about you of a very bad cold, and you had better write a note at once to Dr. Williams, and ask him to come round and see you this evening."

The idea of sending for a doctor, and considering herself an invalid, when she had just been intending to take a three-mile walk in the rain, struck Maud as so ludicrously incongruous that she could not refrain from expostulating.

"But mamma," she began.

But mamma had just become aware of the presence of the waterproof cloak, the india-rubber clogs, and the umbrella, that Maud had counted upon as strong arguments on her side of the walking question. To Mrs. Vernon they appeared to suggest doubts of her daughter's sanity.

"My dear child," she exclaimed, "you were surely not thinking of going out with such a cold—and in the rain too." (Mrs. Vernon, not having looked out of window all day, or cared to make inquiries about the weather, only inferred that it was raining from her daughter's dress.) "It is the maddest notion I ever knew. Pray give up the thought at once; and if the boys and Mabel were going out too, tell them I desire they will do no such thing. It is really hard that at your age I cannot trust a little more to your common sense," Mrs. Vernon ended plaintively, and sank back on her pillows again with a sigh. Maud felt conscience-stricken; not that she could exactly reproach herself with having said or done anything deserving of blame, but she had unintentionally distressed her mother, and she was sorry for it, that was all. She waited a second or two in case her mother should have anything more to say, and then went quietly to the door. Mrs. Vernon called her back. "Oh! Maud, I had forgotten to tell you that I have had a letter from your aunt Fanny. I wrote a few days ago to ask her to come and stay here during your holidays, and fortunately she is able to come. She will arrive to-morrow."

"Oh!" was all that Maud could say. Whether to be glad or sorry she did not know. She had never seen her aunt, who was, indeed, a stranger to all the children; for when, on their return from India, they had stayed for two months at their grandfather's house in London, Fanny Arnott had been abroad with friends, and since then, though Mrs. Vernon had paid two visits to her parents, none of the children had accompanied her; and hitherto, there had always been difficulties in the way of Fanny's accepting her sister's invitations to Everton.

From a photograph that stood on her mother's mantel-shelf, Maud had formed an idea of her unknown aunt that was not exactly favourable, and somehow they had all picked up a notion that she was "stuck-up." What then could Maud say, on hearing that Aunt Fanny was to arrive to-morrow, but "Oh!" She felt, however, that Mrs. Vernon might look for a reply, expressive, if not of pleasure, at least of more interest in the intelligence, and she was glad when it occurred to her to ask by what train her aunt would come. Mrs. Vernon mentioned an evening train. "She will be here at about half-past six; if it is fine some of you had better meet her at the station. And now I shall be glad if you will send Johnson to me. I want to tell her about getting your aunt's room ready." It was clear to Maud, from an unwonted light that came into her mother's eyes when she mentioned Aunt Fanny, as well as from her wishing to speak herself to Johnson about the preparations for her reception, that, whatever might be her own doubts on the subject, Mrs. Vernon anticipated much pleasure from her sister's visit.

Maud delivered her mother's message, and flew back to the school-room in breathless haste to tell the news. Whether her aunt's visit was matter for rejoicing she could not yet decide; but at all events it was so much clear gain to have such important and unexpected intelligence to impart.

"Well, you *have* been a jolly long while," said Harry as she opened the schoolroom door.

"Yes, I know, I'm very sorry, but I could not help it; and the worst of it is we are not to go. But what do you think?"

"Bother!" said both the boys together, and Harry added:

"I think it is awfully hard lines, but I suppose there is no help for it."

"No, I don't think there is," said Maud; "but what do you think is going to happen to morrow? Guess!"

"I hate guessing."

"Oh! but *do* guess."

"Well then, it is going to rain."

"Oh! I don't mean that."

"Then it is not going to rain."

"How tiresome you are! you know I can't mean that kind of thing, because as nobody can possibly know whether it will rain to-morrow or not, there can be no earthly use in guessing about it."

"As for that," said Harry, "I should think that it is only when one

cannot possibly know for certain that any one would take the trouble to guess. But you may as well tell us your news at once, for we shall never guess it; at least I shall not, for I don't mean to try."

"Somebody's coming here to stay."

"*Somebody coming here to stay?*"

"Who is it? Not Cousin Frank? that *would* be jolly." It was a satisfaction to see the boys getting curious at last.

"No, it is not Cousin Frank, and I don't know whether it will be jolly or not, for it is somebody we don't know; it's a woman—it is Aunt Fanny. There, I have told you. Are you glad?"

Apparently not, for again both boys said "Bother!" Upon which Maud became nearly certain that Aunt Fanny's coming was not a matter for rejoicing.

"Oh! I say," broke out Harry, "this is an awful bore. She is coming to look after us, I expect, like a good aunt in a story-book. She will patronize us and call us 'the children,' and tell mamma that we are getting into mischief. We shall not be able to have our own way any more." It showed great constancy of mind that Harry should still cling with affection to the idea of having their own way after the afternoon's rather disappointing experience.

"One might just as well not have any holidays at all," put in Jack, dolefully, while Mabel wondered whether the strange aunt would think playing with dolls a babyish amusement. Aunt Fanny's coming was clearly to be regarded as an impending calamity.

"Now if it had been Cousin Frank, that would have been something like," said Harry. He did not think it necessary to say what a visit from Cousin Frank would have been like, but, from his tone, I think it may be inferred that he meant something of a pleasant nature.

"Cousin Frank," or the Rev. Francis Mildmay, rector of Everton, was a first cousin of the late Colonel Vernon, and a great favourite with all the children at the Hall, especially with Harry, whose happiest hours were passed in riding, walking, or shooting rabbits in his company. The Rectory was about a mile and a half from the Hall, and very few days passed without the children going to Cousin Frank's or Cousin Frank coming to them; and within the last few months Mr. Mildmay had become Harry's tutor in Greek, Latin and mathematics; for at Easter he was to go to Rugby, and Miss Burn was not quite equal to preparing boys for public schools. This arrangement had had, among other results, that of increasing Harry's sense of his own importance.

For the rest of the afternoon nothing could, of course, be talked of but Aunt Fanny's expected visit. It was soon settled that she would be exceedingly disagreeable, and would give herself "no end" of airs. The only thing to be done was to agree upon some plan of action by which she should be made to feel small. They knew that she was much younger than their mother; indeed, Maud believed her to be not more than twenty-two years old. Supposing Maud to be right, the question arose whether it would be consistent with their dignity to call her aunt. Harry was decidedly of opinion that it would not, and registered a vow on the spot that he would never give that title to a stuck-up girl, who was only eight years older than Maud; and Jack having, by careful private calculation, satisfied himself of the correctness of Harry's sum, made a point on his own account by remarking that for them to call Fanny Arnott, aunt, would be neither more nor less absurd than for Mabel to call Harry, uncle, the difference of ages being about the same in both cases; at which Maud laughed, and suggested that the difference of relationship might go for something. Harry hoped Jack felt "squashed," and the subject was allowed to drop till after tea, when Harry revived it by saying that he believed Aunt Fanny, he meant to say Fanny, was awfully blue.

"What makes you think so?"

"Oh! she wrote to mamma once, something about not being able to come here because she was going to some lectures on Greek or Hebrew, or something horrid." What stronger evidence could be needed to establish the charge? Harry had a very correct horror of any young woman knowing more than himself, and it was plain that Aunt Fanny was a blue of the deepest dye. Mabel secretly wondered whether she would be like Mrs. Smith at the post-office, whose face was of a blue-black colour, turned so, she always said, by taking too much doctor's stuff. If Aunt Fanny was to be like that, of course they could not like her, and she, at any rate, would never be persuaded to kiss her. And so poor Aunt Fanny, after being discussed during the greater part of the afternoon, was discussed again all the evening.

Before getting into bed, Harry looked out of window, saw a few stars shining between the clouds, and shouted along the passage to Jack that it was a jolly night, freezing hard, and to-morrow would be a glorious day for the ice.

(To be continued.)

New Year, 1872.

Words by ALFRED GATTY, D.D.
Andante.

Music by ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

Hark, the mer - ry bells are ring - ing.

The first system of the musical score for 'New Year, 1872.' It features a vocal line in treble clef and a piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature is B-flat major (two flats) and the time signature is common time (C). The tempo is marked 'Andante.' The lyrics 'Hark, the mer - ry bells are ring - ing.' are written below the vocal line.

Just as if all men were glad;

The second system of the musical score. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics 'Just as if all men were glad;' are written below the vocal line.

Hark, the mum - - mers gai - ly sing - ing,

The third system of the musical score. It continues the vocal line and piano accompaniment. The lyrics 'Hark, the mum - - mers gai - ly sing - ing,' are written below the vocal line.

Just as if no heart was sad;

Sva.

This system contains the first line of the song. The vocal melody is in the treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is in the grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat). The tempo marking *Sva.* (Sostenuto) is placed below the piano part.

'Tis the New Year come, and bring - ing

This system contains the second line of the song. The musical notation continues with the vocal melody and piano accompaniment.

New e - vents, both good and bad. All things change or

This system contains the third line of the song. The musical notation continues with the vocal melody and piano accompaniment.

rall.

dis - ap - pear, Day by day, and year by year.

rall.

This system contains the fourth line of the song. The tempo marking *rall.* (rallentando) appears above the vocal line and below the piano part. The system concludes with a double bar line.

2

In this world there's no abiding—
 Youth advances, age decays ;
 Leaves are gone, and snow is hiding
 All the often-trodden ways ;
 Cheated is the heart confiding
 In a life where nothing stays.
 With a hand of trembling fear
 Do I touch this opening year.

3

Foolish mortal, fondly straining
 On this earth thy raptured sight—
 Upward look, for there remaining,
 As at first, those orbs of light—
 Sun, and moon, and stars, retaining
 Unimpaired their radiance bright—
 Testify, in accents clear,
 Where there is no change of year.

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.



MY DEAR TOBY,

You asked me when I last saw you to give you a book about wild sports, and you particularly requested, I remember, that it might have "lots about tiger and elephant hunting" in it. Some day or other I may, perhaps, tell you some stories of wild sports in the far East and West, but for the present I send you some extracts from an old diary that I kept when I was about your age. As they only refer to wild sports at home, perhaps you will say, "Oh, this is not exciting enough for me." But what I want to impress upon you is, that unless you have been through what I now intend to describe, you are not likely ever to make much of a tiger hunter. Take my word for it, there is as much excitement to be got out of tracking a hare through the snow by a person of your years as I at my mature age can get out of tracking my bears in America ; if you cannot get excited over catching a trout, you never will over catching a salmon ; and if at your age a blackbird getting up out of a bush does

not "set the pumps going" in your left side, you will not be able to appreciate when you are older shooting big turkeys in the forests of the West. Perhaps I am a little peculiar in this matter, for I confess to being to this day as much gratified by a jumping rabbit as a jumping antelope, and to being quite as much pleased to come across an uncommon English wild flower or fern as the whole of the Swiss family Robinson were when they discovered the bush on which the castor-oil berries grew, and the tree from which they tapped gutta-percha. At any rate, these little notes may help to put you in the way of getting a little excitement for yourself in the open air, and this, I am sure, your mamma will tell you is better for you than to give yourself a headache by sitting over the fire with your dishevelled locks buried in your favourite storybooks of elephant and tiger hunts.

Note 1. January 2nd. "*Went out shooting with Melchior. Beat the Plantation for him with Jim,*" &c.

When this entry was made in my diary there stood on the skirts of a large manufacturing village in the north of England a vicarage surrounded by about three acres of garden and grounds. It was, in fact, my birth-place, and is only so far important for our present purpose as being the first of the hunting-grounds in which I indulged my natural desire for outdoor adventure. How well every corner of it was known, from the corner in the yard where the old logs of firewood were allowed to stand and rot, and amongst which we used to pursue the little lizard-shaped creatures with their bright orange waistcoats spotted with black, to the mysterious hole on the island at the other end of the grounds, which we had fondly hoped had been made by a wandering rabbit, but which we were at length compelled to admit was caused by the fruitless zeal of Jim in his endeavours to unearth a water rat from the bank. Stay, I am not cautious enough in my language. I had forgotten that you do not yet know anything about either the island or Jim. Perhaps it will be best to tell you exactly how the ground lay. In front of the house was a terrace, and from that sloped a steep grass lawn. Then came the carriage road, as we called it, and then a large hayfield, and on the one side of this hayfield were the kitchen garden and orchard, and on the other the plantation mentioned in my diary, running down to the bottom of the hill, and skirting the low end of the field. Then just at the low corner, at

the foot of the orchard, came the island. History never explained why there was a moat here, but such was the case, and the "island" was the peninsula which the moat surrounded, all but the narrow foot-path which connected it with the main land, while on the island itself rose a group of tall oak trees. The villagers called it "t'willow garth," and a firm belief existed among them that the water was inhabited by water snakes. One of them, I remember, when I consulted him as to the possibility of preserving the nests of a colony of ducks, which in later times I introduced to the waters of the moat, from being stolen, advised me seriously to cut a channel through the isthmus and, if possible, surround the island with water. "There's noa woon," said he, "durst cross t'watter. They're a bit shoi o' them watter-snakes." "What," said I, "you don't believe in them!" "I do that, and all," he replied; "whoi, oive seen 'em mysen cooming out o' t'wall by thousands of a summer evening." But, I confess, I never saw myself any of these country cousins of the sea serpent, and it is still a mystery what foundation there was for his curious belief. So much at present for the island. As to Jim, he was a dog, a French poodle. Poor fellow! through innumerable hairbreadth escapes of his life he lived to the mature age of twenty years, and was buried with unusual canine honours. But to return to the text, "*Went out shooting with Melchior. Beat the plantation with Jim,*" &c. Yes, it may seem impossible to believe it, but positively we found our game as near home as the plantation, and had no apparatus to assist us beyond a French poodle and a single-barrelled gun. It was winter, as the date of the extract indicates, and the weather though not frosty was cold. Now, Toby, if you have observed the coming and going of birds at all (if you have not you had better begin at once) you will have noticed that in the winter there is a large kind of missel-thrush about, we used to call them fieldfares, or storm-cocks, because they seemed to like the rough weather. Well, these beautiful birds were to us special objects of pursuit. You see they only came in the winter, and that added a kind of mystery, of romance to them, and they made a peculiar noise, something between a squeak and a chatter, especially when they were settling to roost at the tops of the oak trees on the island. And their breast feathers were boldly marked with large spots, and they were biggish birds, and, on the whole, gamey in their mode of life, and so we were always glad when they arrived in the winter.

The berries of the mountain ash tree on the lawn used to attract them, and there they used to feed. The difficulty was to get within shot of them, they were so very cautious and wily. They have a knack of choosing the highest tree in a wood, where they alight to feed just as the wood-pigeons do when they go in flocks; and when they are feeding on the ground, as they often do, in a field, they seem, or, at any rate, seemed always to us, to get as far away from the hedge as possible. It was as if they knew that Melchior was behind the hedge with his single-barrelled gun, and knew, moreover, the exact limits of the range of the said *fusil de chasse*. Well, on the morning of January 2nd we were at breakfast, and looking out of the window I saw a flock of these fieldfares settle down upon the mountain ash.

"Melchior, look here." My brother did not wait to answer me, he glanced at the ash tree and rushed upstairs to get his gun. I whistled for Jim.

"Are you ready?" said Melchior, who by this time had snapped the preliminary percussion cap, holding the muzzle of his gun up the hall chimney, and who by doing so had considerably startled the maid, who was conveying a new instalment of hot toast to the breakfast-room.

"Yes," I responded, trying to concentrate all my firmness into the monosyllable, and to throw myself into the mental condition of an Australian squatter at the precise moment when the bush-rangers are upon him, and holding a torch to the door of his log hut.

"Then forward;" and Melchior proceeded to open the front door.

"But you don't mean to say that you are going to try and get at them this way?"

"Yes, indeed, young 'un, walk them up; they are sure to fly straight across."

I was for creeping out at the back door, creeping down the back walk, and so, having got behind them, for trying to drive them across to Melchior.

But no, he preferred to "do the thing properly, and walk his game up." So after much discussion we showed ourselves upon the terrace.

It is needless to say that with one of their cries the fieldfares were off in a moment, and took very good care not to fly straight across the range of Melchior's gun.

"Mark them, young 'un."

There was no need for any such injunction. With my greatest speed I rushed to the back of the barn, whence it was possible to survey some of the surrounding country, and returning to Melchior, reported that the fieldfares had settled on a pasture field belonging to R., a neighbouring farmer.

"Which field?" my brother asked.

"Well it's the one on the side of the hill, with an oak tree in the middle of it."

"Ah," said Melchior, "then that's all right; R. has been turning out some manure on that field, and we are sure to find them there later on. I dare say it is one of their regular feeding-places. Now for the plantation."

I grasped the oak stick, which I carried as beater, very firmly, and proceeded to the top corner of the plantation.

"I shall wait down there, near the moat, young 'un; you must drive down the hill. Give me time to get down, and when you hear me whistle begin to beat."

In process of time the whistle came upon my ears, up the hill, and I commenced. Toby, when I was of your age, I did not like going about alone in the dark. Involuntarily I felt that danger was close at hand, and I am sure my pulse used to quicken and I used to clench my teeth and fists as much as to say, now for a tussel with the robber or the bogie, or whatever my imaginary enemy was. Once indeed my enemy was real enough; a door encountered my nose and hurt me considerably. On that occasion, I recollect, I was told that the Duke of Wellington never moved in the dark without holding one hand, at least, in front of him. The advice fixed itself in my memory, for I knew the pictures of the Duke, and did not wonder that he did not wish his nose to come in contact with a door; and somehow to this day I can't help doing what I was told the Duke did, when I am in the dark. Well, I am not going to say that beating the plantation was exactly similar to being in the dark, but I do remember that I used to feel very much the same in the two situations. Perhaps it was that there was an enemy in each case; in the one it was the robber or the bogie, imaginary, and the deal door, real; in the other it was the unknown, hidden in the bushes, that I had to beat out of his hiding place, imaginary, and the stumps and logs which tripped me up very

frequently, real. At any rate I always clenched my teeth and prepared myself for the worst, and now I grasped my stick, and laid about the bushes with a good will. "There, you wretches, take that," I thought, when Tsick, tsick, tsick, up got a blackbird. "Mark," I shouted, and had the satisfaction of seeing the bird fly straight towards the moat, and the still greater satisfaction of seeing him fall to Melchior's "unerring aim." Bow wow! I heard on my right hand, and the next moment off flew Jim, tearing through the bushes. "Look out for a rabbit," I shouted, and as the words escaped me, a cat started from the bushes into full view in the field, Jim in close pursuit. Poor thing, she had been watching for the mice in the wall which bounded the plantation. However, she afforded excellent sport, for puss, after an exciting piece of coursing, got away from the French poodle, and the plantation yielded no more game.

"Now for the fieldfares," said Melchior, and forthwith we started towards the field in which I had marked them down. As we had to pass the moat we of course beat up every bush round it, but with no result. Now at the top corner, as we used to call it, of the moat, there came in a little trickling stream of water. It was the drainage of a pasture field, which lay just behind the kitchen garden wall, and was in fact the only regular supply of fresh water that the moat ever got. Well, as I was beating among the briers and long grass which grew on the side of the moat, I fancied I saw something like a rat disappear rapidly up the end of this fresh-water drain, and curiosity tempted me to bend down and look up it. With intense delight I saw in the sand and mud which had accumulated at the mouth of the drain some unmistakable "tracks." Evidently there was a water bird in the neighbourhood, of some sort or another. The animal was clearly web-footed. What then was its species? was it a teal? or a duck? or a diver?

"Melchior," I shouted. My brother deliberately brought his gun to half-cock, and came towards me from the island.

"What have you got there, young 'un?"

"Why," I exclaimed, "there has been some bird here, perhaps one of the wild geese which flew over the church yesterday; besides, I saw something run up the drain."

"Goose indeed! you're a goose, I think, to suppose that any bird of that size could squeeze his body into that drain."

"Oh, I never thought of that," I said; and in fact I had not sufficient calmness to put two and two together. The tracks absorbed my attention. I have since learnt how essential deliberation is in all matters of sport. To my mind it is the suspense of the struggle between judgment and impulse which constitutes half the pleasure of "the chase." You must keep cool, and yet you must also be excited to enjoy it. Of course in such sport as tiger or buffalo hunting there is an additional element—the danger. At that time I was but a tyro, an amateur, and sadly wanting in the deliberation necessary to constitute a *professional* hand. How we amateurs *rush* at our work! Why, Toby, if I was to set you to dig your little flower-garden over, I should see you pounding away with all your might, and the consequence would be a long interval of rest after a very short interval of work. That is all wrong. You look at John, the gardener. He looks at his spade patronizingly; he turns it round two or three times in his hand as if to balance it; he never omits to take the rustic precaution against blistered hands; he opens his shoulders and takes a long breath to fill his lungs before he stoops to dig. "Come, John," you say, "are you not going to begin?" You think he is wasting time—not a bit of it. He knows far better than you do. He will do twice as much work with half as much effort. He is a *professional*; you are an *amateur*. It is the same in everything. Some day when you are trout-fishing you will come to a pool with a fall at the top end, and a deepish slow current curling under the bank down to the shallow at the low end. Just under the fall a little trout the size of your hand will be jumping and splashing, perhaps vainly attempting to get up the fall. If you are an *amateur* you will immediately try to catch the little gentleman who is making such a fuss, and throw your fly at once on the top part of the pool; if you are a *professional* you will not have allowed your eye to be attracted by the jumping at the top of the pool until you have carefully scrutinized the deep curl under the bank at the low end. You will have detected the fact that the big fish of that pool is feeding quietly in the curl, and you will throw for him first. Well, all this lecture has arisen out of the fact that I jumped to a conclusion too hastily on the discovery of the "tracks." It is, however, not the less worth remembering.

"It is a bald-headed coot," said Melchior gravely, as he bent down and examined the mysterious foot-prints. "I was reading about them

yesterday. 'The bald-headed coot, *Fulica atra* of the naturalists,' the book said."

"No, Melchior, you don't mean it!" I replied: the Latin name had added immense importance to the tracks at my feet.

"A rather uncommon bird, I fancy," he continued; "but we will look it up when we get in. Ah! bad dog. Keep Jim out of the way, young'un; he wants to be scratching at the hole, and we must leave it quite quiet till to-morrow morning, and then the beggar will come out to feed.

I tore myself and Jim away from the newly-found tracks, and we proceeded in the direction of the fieldfares.

On we went, past the dam which Melchior proposed to take on our way back, on across the "Mermaid's Ford," as we called the stream which fed the dam, and in which, under a strong escort of nurses, we, that is, brothers and sisters, with our shoes and stockings on the bank,

"Our youthful limbs were wont to lave,"

carrying on a crusade against the miller's thumbs or bull-heads, and loach, who sneaked from view under the flat stones in the shallows, while the fresh-water shrimps ran over and about our toes. The stream crossed, on the side of the hill, standing out against a background of the thick fir-wood which clothed the upper part of the distance, appeared a group of extensive farm-buildings, and rather to the right of them the field in question.

"Can you see them?" Melchior whispered.

"Perfectly," I replied, with my eye still applied to a convenient aperture between the stones of the wall. "There seem to be about thirty on the ground, and a lot on the tree in the middle of the field; but none within shot."

"Then there's nothing for it but your driving them; we have stalked them as close as is possible."

"You wait here," I said, "and I think I can get you a shot."

And here, Toby, I must confess, to the honour of your buffalo-hunting books, that I took a hint from them. Cautiously I crept up the side of the hedge skirting the field, sometimes, when there was a gap, lying at full length, and proceeding only on my hands and toes up the hill to the top of the field. Here a difficulty presented itself. There was a gap for a gate, but no gate to protect me from the sight of the

watchful sentinels on the tree in the middle of the field. Then my memory came to my aid. I had read of people who hunt bison clothing themselves in the skins of the animals they were hunting, and being so enabled to approach closer to their game. I could not, indeed, suddenly creep into a thrush's skin, even had I had one with me, but I thought, perhaps they will mistake me for a cow or a horse. Anyhow, I entered the field on all-fours. I had some protection: the' heaps of refuse from the breweries, which were laid upon the field by way of manure, had not been scattered, and in and out among them I crept, seeming, as much as possible, to be nibbling at the grass. The sentinels on the tree were puzzled; first they squeaked, then flew down to their friends, and then flew up again. But my plan was succeeding, the flock did not get up from the ground, and the nearer I approached them the further they retreated, eating and running down the hill towards the wall, behind which Melchior lay concealed. A puff of smoke through the wall, a bang, and the flock rose from the ground, but one of them lay stretched seventy-two ram-rods' lengths from the wall, on the grass. Here was a triumph indeed! The longest shot which the single barrel had ever made, and a plump bird.

"Capital, young 'un; you did it well. We'll have this for dinner, and I shall insist upon its being cooked properly, as a snipe is, on toast." Whether this fearful threat was put in execution, I now forget. At any rate, it was getting late, and we started for home.

"We can't do the dam to-day, young 'un."

"No, I suppose not," I replied, in an interval snatched from a mental repetition of the words "Bald-headed coot," and "the natives approach their game clothed in the skins," &c. No, we had no time to do the dam that day, and neither have I time, Toby, to tell you by this post where and what the dam was, but you will hear lots about it if you will condescend to read some other extracts from my old diary when I have time to copy them out.

Your affectionate Uncle, &c.

MARGERY.

By Douglas Straight.

CHAPTER I.

THE THIRTY-FIRST OF DECEMBER.

GREY waves rolling pertinaciously in from the North Sea, buffeting the old jetty-head and making pleasure-boats and bathing machines, drawn high up on the beach, tremble in their wintry resting-places. White horses, dancing, curvetting, and prancing over the waste of waters, engaging in gallant charges one against the other, till now and then the surface of the sea without the breakers looked like the syllabubs Aunt Mary whips up in the kitchen to delight the young people on high days and holidays. Though the moon was high and bright in the heavens, with myriads of stars twinkling and circling round her, the sheets of scud drifting before the wind proclaimed to the knowing ones of Fishbourne-on-sea that it was a dirty night, when mending nets was a far better occupation than trawling with them for herrings. In fact, the fisherman world of that ancient watering-place had, one and all, run up their round-headed, ugly-mugged craft upon the shingles, not caring to face the angry north-easterly blast, that ever and anon swept with hungry roar from the sea up the narrow streets, catching the few folks about as they met it at the corners with a "take that" kind of salutation, more forcible than pleasant. It made itself particularly free with the ricketty outside shutters of Ben Linton's small house in Bloater Row, catching hold of them with a rough grasp, and doing its best to drag them away from the rusty staples that pinned them to the wall. But they who were inside did not trouble themselves with what was going on without. Ben himself was sitting at the table with a big pair of spectacles on, half-way down his nose, trying, with great pretension of learning in his expression, to spell through the column of a newspaper, which, to judge from its well-thumbed and dirty appearance, had weathered the manipulation of a good many horny fingers, better used to the handling of ropes than to turning over printed pages. Yet, with admirable perseverance, he struggled on through his self-imposed

task, sometimes pausing dreamily for a moment to pass his iron palm over the soft fair hair of the silent child, who, sitting on a stool at his feet, was gazing at the bright sparks chasing one another up the chimney, with a sort of lost, sleepy interest, that told how her thoughts shaped fancies and faces in the fire. For twelve years these two had lived all but alone together, the only stranger who ever entered the house being the kindly wife of a near neighbour, who came early in the morning to set the place in order for the day, and did what little cooking Ben and his daughter required. I must not be too enthusiastic about Margery, such was her name; indeed some may think she was older and more forward for her fourteen years than was altogether desirable; but she had been her father's companion almost since she could run alone, and every day she had learned more and more that necessity for self-dependence which you, my dear young people, must sooner or later, in this very curious world in which you find yourselves, take unto your heart of hearts and comprehend. Everybody in Fishbourne-on-sea knew her, and whatever my predictions in her favour may be, I can assert, without fear of contradiction, that she was everybody's pet, and had an amount of affection and admiration bestowed upon her sufficient to have turned stronger heads than hers. Let it be confessed she knew her power, but she exercised her sovereignty in a mild and gentle fashion, ruling her fishermen subjects more by coaxing and caressing than according to the generally accepted principles of government. For there was not a salt upon Fishbourne beach that had not been made friends with by Margery, and they always looked for her coming amongst them as that of a bright little fairy, whose young face and ever cheery spirits seemed to bring some message from another happy, untroubled world, far beyond that hard and perilous life of labour of theirs in which they had to pass their lives from year's end to year's end. Always out in the early morning to see her father return from the night's fishing, they looked as much for her figure at the head of the jetty, when the boats came trooping home, as for the dull red lamp upon it that guided them to their moorings. No matter the weather, she was ever there ready to take his hand, and hurry him homeward. Well might his great, big, rough sailor's heart be full of her, for she had done her best to fill up the void that had been left in it, one bright May morning, when her mother, with the spring birds singing, and the

warm sun promising the coming summer, with a sigh of relief after years of pain, went peacefully home, her little one sleeping on her bosom. Thence Ben caught her to his heart, and from that hour, in the kiss he pressed upon her baby mouth, was sealed a contract of mutual love and devotion, which had endured, strong and unchanging, as if sustained and blessed by some influence from above.

A wilder gust than before shook the door, and it was followed by a smart rap upon the panel, which made Ben drop his paper, and brought Margery to her feet, and, with a few quick paces, to the latch.

"Who can it be, father, this time of night?" she asked.

"Never mind, lass, open, and let us see," was the somewhat nervous rejoinder; for Ben had a shadow upon him, and he knew not when it would fall.

The door was opened, the wind romping in with rude insolence, and a stranger, muffled up, with a long coat on, and a thick comforter wound round his throat and mouth, so as almost to meet the rim of the "sou'-wester" that covered his head, entered, and roughly closed it behind him.

"Good evening, Linton," he growled, untwisting his wrap, and disclosing a hard, deeply lined face, which wore a cruel, determined expression. "I daresay you are surprised to see me at this late hour, but my business is pressing, and for your sake I did not wish to delay. Nay, hear me," he went on, taking a chair, and motioning Ben to silence; "I am serious. I have been with the Squire to-night, and he says that the fifty pounds and the three-quarters' rent must be paid to-morrow by twelve o'clock, or you must clear out. I begged him to let the matter stand till New Year's Day was over; but he sternly refused me, and told me as I valued my place not to repeat such a proposition to him. So now you see your position, and I come to warn you of it."

For a moment, let me pause to explain. The house in which Ben lived was the property of Jonathan Ashleigh, who owned the larger part of Fishbourne, and resided in a big park, some mile and a half distant. He was a cold, hard man, who, as a manufacturer in a well-known midland town, had wrung his fortune out of badly paid, cruelly worked men, women, and children, and had transplanted himself and his money, to create a small kingdom for himself here by the sea, grinding his people down with a rod of iron, and doing his very best

to teach them that wealth is the power before which all must bow. In his great, workhouse-looking mansion, beside himself and his many servants, you would have found but one bright and pleasant person, and that his son Harry, the sole heir to all his property, a merry laughing boy, full of all those generous impulses and nobilities of disposition that some two years at Eton had already developed and strengthened. The harshest and coldest of men always has his tender point, and Squire Ashleigh's love for his son was the only weakness his iron temperament had known. Had he been asked to lay his life down for the lad he would cheerfully have done so. Every wish, every want of his was anticipated and provided for, till Harry himself found it difficult to discover anything he really did require. Outside this one tenderness Jonathan Ashleigh was implacable and unapproachable, seeming to be an utter disbeliever in human sympathy or affection. Silas Brown, his steward, the man who so unceremoniously had thrust himself into Ben Linton's house, was a fitting servant for such a master, and did his dirty work with a rigour and earnestness worthy a better cause. He had been a factory overlooker when Squire Ashleigh was actively engaged in business, and had accompanied him to his new kingdom, there to bring to bear those same powers which had enabled him to control over three hundred operatives as hardly used and as ill-paid as I have told before. The object of his visit to Ben is not very difficult to state. Times had been bad with the fishing; new towns had sprung up upon the coast with rapid railway communication to London, and he had found that the buyers of that great city slowly but surely drew their agents from Fishbourne to more convenient spots, leaving but a poor and unremunerative market behind. His rent had got three quarters in arrear, and fifty pounds he had borrowed, ostensibly of the Squire, but really of Brown, to repair his boat and buy a new set of nets, hung like a dead weight round his neck; for, look where he would, he knew not how he could pay them. This was why the furrows in his face had during the past few months grown so deep and the poor old fellow's sleep at night was so disturbed. After all these long years of toil and determined industry, through long nights of peril and hardship in storm and tempest, it was bitter work to realise the fact that he was a poorer man than forty years before, when, as a lad of sixteen, he began a fisherman's life with his father. But so it was; the milk was spilt,

and there was no use crying over it, and it was with a perfectly calm voice that, coming back to the thread of my story, he replied to Brown,

"I'm much obliged to you, mister, for your kindness in coming to tell me the bad news. I've been expecting it ever so long, and I ain't no cause to complain of the Squire. I know I've been very back'ard, and it's made me very miserable, but blood can't be got out of a stone, and, though I've screwed and scraped, and starved the child and me, all I've got is twenty pounds, and I suppose that ain't no use." With that he went towards a cupboard by the fireplace, and unlocked it, taking out a small cashbox, and pausing for a moment to hear Brown's reply.

"No, Mr. Linton, it isn't any use. My orders are, the whole sum, and nothing less. Sixty pounds ten shillings for the principal and rent, and three pounds for interest; in all, sixty-three pounds ten, or otherwise you must go. That is the Squire's direction, and you know he isn't to be turned."

"Then God help us, Margery," exclaimed Ben, in a broken voice, taking his little daughter's hand, and putting back the box into the cupboard, "you and I must spend the first day of the New Year in the streets." And with that he crossed to his chair and sank down upon it despairing, as well he might. For a moment the now scanty embers of the fire flashed into sudden flame, as if a new life had entered into them, and lit up Margery's face, as she laid it upon her father's shoulder.

"Dear old dad," she whispered soothingly into his ear, "remember what you so often have told me, that every cloud, no matter how dark it is, has its silver lining."

Were the fishermen wrong, when they said she was some fairy from the land of spirits, or was there some strange influence about her, which brought Ben to his feet erect and determined as ever?

"Good-night, mister," he said, beckoning Brown to the door, an intimation which that worthy, with considerable expression of surprise upon his face, mechanically obeyed, rewrapping himself in his comforter with an energy that seemed as if he were bent upon trying the effects of strangling, "you won't begrudge us this night in peace. We'll be ready to-morrow to turn out, tell the Squire, and if I work my fingers off I'll pay him."

Again the cold gust **came** rushing in, as Brown opened the door, blowing out the flickering candle, and leaving Ben and his daughter with no light but that of the glowing cinders.



“Good-night,” he growled; “I’m very sorry for you;” and then there was a click of the latch, and they were alone.

“Thank you for nothing,” cried Margery after him, running to draw the bolt, and coming back as quickly to her place by her father’s shoulder.

The fire sputtered and died, and then its embers crackled and chattered, as if loth to say good-bye to one another; the wind, dying away from roars and shrieks into sighs and moans, was supplanted in its noise by the plash of rain upon the clinkers of the streets and against the window-panes of the houses; Father Time, driving on the hands of the clock, was hastening the world to the close of another year of its existence. The very sea herself, as if appreciating the emotions of the season, irritated no more into temper from above, like an angry woman, soothed herself into a calm, and smiled with diamond-crested waves upon the silver moon, now sailing unclouded and triumphant in the broad expanse of the blue heavens. Creeping upon her father's knee, and nestling her head more comfortably upon his shoulder, close to the rough, worn face, close to the tangled, bushy beard, Margery, with unclosed eyes, waited for that coming day of which her father had spoken. Even as he slept some tears, children of sad dreams, stole down his cheek from beneath closed lids, and moistened her forehead. But she neither stirred nor moved; she would not have broken his rest for worlds. By-and-by, over his face there grew, like sunshine on an April day, a pleased, peaceful look, for as he slumbered there came a vision of a child-angel with white wings and great, soft, loving eyes, who brought him a message, that said "Hope for the best!"

Thus the dawn of the last day of the year found Ben Linton and his daughter, and ere the twilight should come they knew not where they would be.

CHAPTER II.

NEW YEAR'S EVE.

HARRY ASHLEIGH was up betimes, as he had arranged to go out for a day's fishing, a sport to which he was fondly devoted, and it was necessary to catch the ebb-tide in order to make the cluster of rocks, where the whiting were to be found. But he was not a bit too early for Joe Honeywood, whose smart little yawl was dancing like a cork upon the waves just off the jetty-head, with her owner on board, ready and waiting for the young Squire. He and Joe were old and staunch friends, who in the vacation time had made many an expedition together, and had often weathered a stiff breeze in one another's

company, with perfect confidence in mutual pluck and endurance. There was a pleasant smile on the face of each of them as Joe hauled up the foresail, which, catching the fresh morning wind, bellied out and set the tiny craft a-going. The crestlets on the waters glistened like diamonds in the brightness of the morning sun; while the keen air, playing upon their cheeks, set them all a-glow with a ruddy tinge of boisterous health. Harry, at the tiller, his merry face full of pleasure and freshness, watched with gratified look the stiff little craft as she bent to the breeze and bounded over the waves, walking them "like a thing of life," at a speed that had more than once carried her victoriously through regattas at the neighbouring ports. Then, when all the sails had been satisfactorily arranged, Joe came and took his seat alongside Harry, bent upon engaging in one of those agreeable chats that they always indulged in when they came together. There was a good deal of talk between them, concerning nautical and piscatorial matters; but at last the conversation found its way to Margery and her father.

"I'm very much afraid, sir," said Joe, "that poor old Ben aint in the very best of conditions. Times has been uncommon hard with him, and it do seem as if nothing could go right with him, all these years he's been a slaving and a struggling. They do say as he's backward with his rent, and every one knows he had to borrow fifty pound of the Squire to keep himself on his legs after the storm last winter, when the *Jane* got so knocked about, and all his nets was carried away."

"I never heard of this before, Joe," struck in Harry, with an expression of surprise and pain upon his countenance. "I didn't know he was as hard pressed as that."

"No, nor no one else, Master Harry," replied Joe, shaking his head mournfully, "till a few weeks ago, but the butcher and one or two other nice kind-hearted folks in that jolly good-natured place yonder"—he went on shaking his fist at Fishbourne, that now looked, from the distance, little better than a row of huts upon the shore—"set to putting the screw upon the poor old boy, and then it all came out; and what's to be the end of it I don't know."

"Why, it will come right enough, Joe," cheerily responded Harry. "I wish some one had told me before, I would have made it all square with my father, because, you know, he will do anything I ask him;

and if I had only said I wished him to see Ben through his difficulties, I'm sure he would have done so without a word. I am so sorry to hear of his trouble."

"Well, Master Harry," replied Joe, "it does my heart good to hear you say so, and it aint too late; leastways, not that I knows of. So if I may make so bold as to ask you, perhaps when you gets home this evening you'll speak to the Squire at once, and get him to set matters all fair and ship-shape."

And there the conversation ended; Joe, glad to have at last been able to relieve his mind of a weight from which he had long wished to deliver it, and Harry fully resolved at the very earliest opportunity to plead Ben's cause with his father, knowing that the old fisherman could have no better advocate.

There is no need to describe how the day passed, or how good the sport was that attended it. Towards four o'clock, Joe, looking round and seeing that the shadows of the coming darkness were lengthening, suggested that the course should be bent homewards; and so the anchor was tripped, and the bows of the yawl were pointed towards the shore. Those who have sailed along the coast whereon Fishbourne is situate know that squalls spring up in that quarter very rapidly, and, with his well-practised eye, Joe did not altogether like the appearance of the sky to the eastward. There was a gloomy and unsettled look about the clouds, and the wind, which had been comparatively quiet, began to moan in a sad and foreboding fashion. Preparing for an emergency, he took in two reefs of the foresail, and then sat himself quietly down with the rope of it in his hand, prepared to let go if a sudden gust came. Harry did not say anything to this, but he knew what it all meant, and, pressing his hat firmly on his head, took a tighter grasp of the tiller.

It came at last! With a shriek as of some fiend loosed from his prison-house, the squall came sweeping over the waters, catching the yawl as if it were nothing more than some child's toy vessel, and bearing it along with a velocity that, old hands at sailing as they were, for a moment sent the hearts of its occupants into their mouths. But the brave little craft held her own, and scudded away before it like a fairy tripping over the grass. Only a few minutes sufficed to beat the sea into billows, yet she battled gallantly, fighting her way, and scattering foam along her sides to mark her path. Suddenly, with

a crack, the foresail flew away, but Joe, his face calm and determined, was ready with his knife, and in shorter time than it takes to write, had cut it adrift. [On, with almost bare poles, they rushed, the waves hissing and seething around them, as if crying aloud for prey. Oh! only to be upon that shore, which now, through the thickening gloom, showed itself in front of them, as they rose on the crests of the waves, in a white streak of sand and houses.

Margery was standing with her father at the jetty-head, her favourite place, where she was wont to see the boats come in from the fishing-grounds. Her eyes were straining anxiously out seawards, and she saw Joe Honeywood's boat, which she knew well, engaged in its fierce conflict with the elements.

"Dad," she said, anxiously turning to Ben, whose long grey hair under his sou'-wester, was being roughly used by the wind, "there's Joe and the young Squire out there; don't you see?" she continued, pointing with her hand; "and they seem to be having a bad time of it."

Ben, roused from his reverie, looked in the direction towards which she had called his attention, and in a moment he seemed to have shaken himself together and become another man.

"They'll never do it," he shouted in a hoarse voice. "She'll never stand. They're more than a mile yet to come, and the sea gets bigger every second."

With that he said no more, but rushed towards the shore end of the jetty, where several fishermen were standing.

"Look here, mates," he exclaimed, running to one of the old ferry-boats that were used to bring the herrings ashore from the luggers; "there's Joe Honeywood out yonder there in trouble with his yawl, and we must get this old craft afloat in case he can't hold on, and our help should be wanted."

It needed no second appeal. Half a dozen of the sturdy beachmen hurried down to lend a hand, and soon the boat had been dragged to the water's edge and was ready to be launched when an opportunity should offer itself. The great waves came battering in one after another with a noise as of thunder, and they knew that there would be no small difficulty to get her afloat, let alone clearing her from the breakers. So with eager eyes they watched for the chance, while Margery, still at the jetty-head, peering eagerly through the increasing

gloom, looked for the yawl, her very soul going forth in a prayer for the safety of the two lives it carried with it. The giant billows seemed to be disporting themselves with it, casting it from one to another like a feather before the wind—now hurrying it out of sight in the trough, now lifting it aloft upon their crests. Deeper grew the darkness, hoarser rushed the wind, while the old jetty itself shook to its very foundations, as it parted the huge rollers with its ancient posts and piers. And in this scene the fight for life went on! And I, my children, have stood upon the sea-shore and beheld enacted before me a tragedy, that as my mind now goes back to it, the chill of horror I then felt returns and benumbs me. A December afternoon; a wide expanse of muddy ocean whipped into mad fury by a north-easterly hurricane; a dirty, weather-beaten, rickety old collier not three hundred yards away, upon a treacherous sand. Within her wooden walls, cracking and splitting, as the waves beat them in, ten human souls, like you, like me, who stand on this firm ground, creatures of flesh and blood, with dear ones at home, who love them and whom they love—dear ones whom no spirit message tells of the blow that is impending them, else the top and marbles would be flung aside, the doll hurried away into the cupboard, and mother's song hushed. To that doomed ten no help could go. In vain, efforts were made to launch the life-boat by those brave beachmen, straining every thw and muscle, till the knots upon their temples stood out like lumps of rope, and their eyes burned with disappointment. Even now, as I sit here, pen in hand, the vision of that awful picture rises before me. Ten men clinging to the quivering shrouds and cross-trees, ten minutes watching them in a torture of suspense, till one almost prayed that the end might come—then a huge wall of water rising above them like a mountain—a shriek of wild despair borne shorewards in a wail of agony on the wind—a hoarse murmur of horror among the rough beachmen, and all was over.

But back to Margery, who, still motionless as a statue at her post, saw the yawl coming nearer and nearer, making desperate struggles to hold its own. Surely as she watched it she began to realise within herself that if it kept its present course it would not clear the jetty-head, and then what hope was there for those on board! She pressed her lips firmly together, and her breath came short and thick, while her heart beat against her side with hard and sickening thumps.

Close at her feet lay a coil of rope, the end of which was fastened to a rail. Involuntarily her eyes lighted upon it, and then some thought seemed to possess her, for she bent down, and lifting it, cast it over into the sea, keeping the other end in her hands. Still on the beach Ben and the fishermen were striving to get the boat afloat, for they too saw the peril towards which the yawl was drifting, and redoubled their efforts.

But a few short minutes, that seemed like a lifetime to those who were looking on, remorseless sea and wind, relaxing not a jot, drove the frail bark on to its fate with merciless fury. With rude cast they hurled it against the jetty-head, smashing it as a bottle flung upon the pavement. Swift as lightning, with that activity which always distinguished her, learnt from those among whom she had always lived, Margery had clambered over the rail of the jetty and was lowering herself down by the rope. It was a rash, mad act; she scarcely knew what she was doing or what she intended to do, only as her feet touched the water she saw a pale face sweeping past her on the crest of the wave. With a convulsive effort she threw the end of the rope, still held in one of her hands, towards it, clinging fast to the rest with the other. Then a great billow struck her, driving with brutal violence against one of the jetty piles, and all was darkness and oblivion!

CHAPTER III.

NEW YEAR'S MORNING.

THERE was no ringing of bells in Fishbourne-on-sea that night to speed the dying, welcome the coming year. A great sadness rested upon it and those who dwelt therein, for a brave fisherman, well-known upon its shore, had gone to his account, and a little maiden, that all loved, lay silent and senseless upon her bed within her father's cottage, slowly but surely gliding on to the gate of the dark valley of the shadow. For the one life of the Squire's son it seemed, two victims were to be offered up, while he, but slightly the worse for a short immersion in the water, was dozing peacefully in a warm room at the doctor's house, whither he had been carried, quietly sleeping off the effects of his accident. The faint light of a single candle burning in Margery's chamber disclosed the faces of three men—of Dr. Brownlow, the white-headed, generous-hearted surgeon, Ben

Linton, and Squire Ashleigh, who, gathered round the little bed, were gazing upon the pale young face, eagerly looking for some sign to betoken returning animation. In the awful silence nought was heard but the ticking of the old clock below stairs, working on its way with the same monotonous "click, clack," perfectly cold and passionless to the flight of time its restless hands remorselessly marked. Now and then a gust of wind sweeping up the Row shook the window-frame and went roistering on to pay its call elsewhere, welcoming the newborn year with rough familiarity, as if it were an old friend. Dr. Brownlow's face wore a serious and anxious expression, for with experienced eye he had gathered in at a glance that all his skill was useless here, and that Margery's stay on earth could at the most be but a few short hours. Ever and anon he gently passed his hand tenderly over the burning forehead, smoothing back the hair, still damp from the pitiless sea, with a woman's touch, and listening with keen ear to catch the sound of her breathing. As for Ben, he was well-nigh choking, struggling to keep back the great salt tears that, despite all his endeavours, forced their way out and rolled down the deep furrows in his cheeks. With that battered, dying child was departing all the hope, the sunshine of his life; the one thing that, through long trying years of anxiety, had sustained and cheered him, making him feel, even in his most desperate moments, that heaven had left him something still to live for. As for the Squire, providence thus brought directly home to him something that, with magic touch, awakened the long dead better feelings of his nature. He could not stand by and watch the scene without remorse and repentance; it reminded him of long years of selfish indifference, of harsh deeds, of cruel words; and as his thoughts travelled back to all these things he bent his head in shame and self-condemnation. For he read from this dying child a lesson of self-sacrifice, which in his cold, proud existence he had never believed in. At that moment he would have given thousands of his much-prized wealth to have bought her life and ransomed his own past, that now seemed so hideous to him; but not every piece of it, told out to the uttermost farthing, could, he knew, avail to stay her inevitable fate, or wash away bitter memories.

Slowly the hours dragged along, Ben sitting at one side of the fire and the Squire at the other; the doctor still remaining by his patient, placing and replacing cool bandages upon the throbbing temples.

Towards morning the fever lessened, but the breathing grew less regular, and was apparently attended with greater effort, signs in which the good doctor saw that the end was not far distant. On the crisp air of dawn came the sound of the village church bell, tolling for poor Joe Honeywood, and each of those three strong men shuddered as they heard it. The candle had flickered and expired. but from out the darkness grey streaks of daylight, pushing their way to rouse the world to enter upon a fresh year's journey, straggled in through the window, and by-and-by a streak of sunshine darted in and fell upon Margery's face. Then over it there came a bright and happy smile, and opening her eyes quietly, as one awakening from a pleasant sleep, she looked upon the golden shadow up towards the heaven, whence it came.


"Father," she softly whispered, and Ben starting to his feet, crept to her side, "put your arm round me, and let me rest my head against you." For a moment she paused, as he acceded to her request, and then went on in a voice strangely calm and clear. "I can feel your heart beating so, and your dear old face is wet with tears. Don't fret for your poor Margery; she is so happy, so very happy! She can never return to you, but you will come to her, and then there will be no more troubles. Hush!" she said, softly, pressing her head more closely to his breast; "can't you hear the music and the voices? can't you see the bright flowers and the good angels? They are beckoning to me, and their faces are so sweet and kind, that I must not stay with you any longer."

There her lips stopped, her eyes closed, and up the golden ladder of sunshine her spirit went back to its God!

Ben Linton still lives, but not in the old cottage in the Row. The Squire has fitted up for him a room at the Park, and all that money and tenderness can do to comfort his declining days is bestowed with lavish hand. He has grown old and feeble, but every day of his life, summer or winter, fair or foul weather, he makes his pilgrimage to a corner of Fishbourne churchyard, where under a yew-tree is to be found a plain marble cross, with a snapped lily carved upon it, and the inscription, "Margery"—nothing more!

THE ORIGIN OF ENGRAVING.

By Eleanor Stredder, Author of the "Raven of Redruth."

 **S** there a child to be found who does not love pictures? Who does not rejoice in a new picture he has never seen before, or delight in an old one that illustrates some favourite story-book, and of which he never tires. Form and colour please us best at first. I well remember a little brown-roofed cottage, with blue windows and a red door, that took my fancy mightily, when I could just read well enough to make out "it was the house that Jack built." As we grow older, we begin to appreciate the more refined beauties of light and shade, and leave the woodcut and the coloured print for the copperplate engraving, and fall into ecstasies over some lovely frontispiece or minute vignette.

You all understand how pictures are drawn and painted, and most of you know the woodcut came in with printing; but who first thought of engraving, that beautiful art, which multiplies pictures so fast and reproduces for us the splendid masterpieces of a Raphael from Italian shores, and the dear familiar scenes, immortalised by a Landseer and a Turner, in our island home? Ideas grow just as trees and plants grow, when there are observant eyes, listening ears, and careful memories, to mark all that is taking place around them. There were many such in clever Florence, in the days when the art-loving Medici held the rule there, and painters and goldsmiths flourished, as they have never flourished since in any kingdom. Yet they were dangerous and turbulent times, and the artificer in his workshop was often interrupted by the rude clash of arms. So for mutual defence they bound themselves together, in a half secular, half religious association, and called themselves the Brotherhood of St. Luke. They were painters, goldsmiths, and carvers, basketmakers, guilders, saddlers, and armourers. A confused jumble of trades, we should think it, in the present day; but it was not so then, for they all partook more or less of design. A strange occupation for monks to make swords, you will be ready to exclaim; but although they were bound by a vow, and had other religious observances, they were not just like monks in

general; in fact, the Lukites were the connecting link between the ecclesiastical foundations and the trade guilds.

Go back to the days of tournaments; think of the furniture of a war-horse, and the trappings of a lady's palfrey. How could the armourer or the saddler finish their work without the goldsmith or the painter? They worked for, and with each other. Was it not the emulation thus excited that taught all to excel?

The stout knight's armour was adorned with splendid arabesque tracery, called niello-work, which demanded all the skill of the goldsmith to complete it; whilst the painter's brush was required to emblazon his arms, in heraldic colours, on banner and shield.

Now one of the cleverest of these brethren of St. Luke, Maso Finiguerra, a famous goldsmith, always wanted to know how his work would look when it was done; so he adopted the following plan with his niello-work. After he had chosen his design, which in all probability some painter had drawn for him, he cut it in the silver plate with his graver; then, before he inlaid it with niello (that is, molten silver mixed with zinc, to give it a darker shade, from whence it derived its name), he took a print of it, in very fine earth, and from the cut being to the right hand, and hollow, the proof came out on the left, showing the little earthen cast in relief; upon this he threw liquid sulphur, from which, as it hardened and separated from the earthen one, he obtained a second proof to the right hand, and taking from the relief a hollow form. To get the light and shade, he filled up the little hollows with lamp black, scraping it away again by degrees, where he wanted the light; then he polished it with oil, until the sulphur looked as bright as silver. This was afterwards called a *zolfo*; for when Finiguerra had set the fashion of taking a proof, other goldsmiths soon followed it.

Sometimes they would take a third proof, from the last, so that the pattern was again reversed, and to the left, like the earthen cast.

For the Florentines thought these *zolfi* far too beautiful to be left on a shelf in the goldsmith's workshop, for his apprentices and pupils to copy. They bought them, and used them in many ways. Some are still to be found in Italy: perhaps amongst the plate of an ancient monastery you might still be shown the inlaid piece of silver, and the *zolfo* from which it was made; and occasionally one is discovered in the panel of an antique cabinet. You may always know a *zolfo* by its

edges, for they will chip off, and the lampblack will peel away from the sulphur.

But all this tedious process gave a great deal of trouble, and took up too much time to be tried for every piece of work the goldsmiths had to make. After a while, Finiguerra found an easier way. He took his proof on moistened paper, using the same lampblack, and pressing it with his hand. A very simple process, was it not, to lead to such grand results? The next step was easy enough. These paper proofs were made by all the workers in niello, and may be found in any part of Italy; but remember they were always reversed.

Then the idea was struck out that these metallic engravings would be so much better than woodcuts, much more beautiful and correct; so they cut the pictures in tin, in the reverse, and brought the impression right. To manage it more handily, they fixed the plate in a frame of wood, with four small nails, to prevent it slipping; then they filled up the little cuts and hollows with a light blue tint, instead of lampblack; upon this they placed the paper, and over it a small moist linen cloth, pressing it down hard with a roller. You may tell the age of a plate by the marks of linen on its back, for after a while felt was tried, because that left no trace behind it. So you see how rapidly the idea grew, from that first experiment in Maso Finiguerra's workshop. Then the Germans took it up; it was very easy for their goldsmiths and printers to see how it was done. They tried it at once, with their printer's ink and press, improving the mechanical part of it greatly. Very soon copper was tried for the plate; in fact the Germans never used any other metal.

Perhaps you wonder why the Germans were the first to engrave after the Italians, and not the French or English. We soon began to print, and there could not have been many years between the two inventions; but then Florence, when Maso Finiguerra lived, had a great deal to do with Germany; almost all her princes had their money coined there, and Florentine merchants resided in their cities constantly. Besides, we were deep in the wars of the Roses, contending who should be chief amongst us. But see the Christlike sovereignty of servitude. The men who first imagined the printing-press and the graver's plate have indeed received a kingdom, that knows no limits but the limits of the civilized world. The press and the plate, the book and the picture, who can calculate the boon and the blessing they have been, and will be, to generations past, and yet to come

HAPPY THOUGHTS.



WHEN the many compass me,
Love, I never talk of thee;
And the thought that fills my heart
Guard I jealously apart.

But when wondering they descry
Sudden gladness light my eye,
'Tis that through my soul the while
Memory has shed thy smile.

M. M. M.

BOOK NOTICES.



SEVERAL nice present books are before us, and we must be brief in our notices of them. "Kirstin's Adventures; a Tale for the Young" (Bell and Daldy), can need no recommendation from us, who gladly accepted it as the serial story in "Aunt Judy" for a whole year. It comes back to us now, in a volume of its own, like a favourite child in a new frock; and portions which we were compelled to omit in our own pages for lack of space are now included, and add increased value to a work of permanent interest.

"Doll World; or, Play and Earnest" (Bell and Daldy), is not perhaps quite such a favourite with us as "Deborah's Drawer," which was also from Mrs. Robert O'Reilly's pen; but many may prefer it, and it certainly is a well-told story, with excellent teaching. The little heroine, through childhood, lives in Doll World—a dreamland of her own; and this ideal existence she maintains, to her own great comfort, when a heavy cloud of adversity settles on her home. Cheerful in the midst of troubles, owing to her happy power of abstraction, she maintains her peculiarity of character throughout the narrative, which closes with her being happily surrounded with living dolls, who own her as their mother.

"Katie; or, the Simple Heart." By D. Richmond. (Bell and Daldy.) This is a reprint of an old favourite, being a

sequel to "Annie Maitland." The story is founded on a piece of deception practised by Annie Maitland, who allows the blame to rest upon her cousin Katie. The constant torments of Annie's conscience are well depicted, and convey a striking warning against untruthfulness. It is written very much in the style of Miss Yonge's popular works.

"The Right and the Wrong Way; or the Ardingley Lads," is published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and vividly describes the two ways of life pursued by brothers: one being contented and industrious in that condition of life where Providence had placed him; whilst the other adopts Socialism and discontented views, and ends by appropriating what did not belong to him. It is well fitted for parish libraries.

"Effie's Year." (Nesbit and Co.) A story for very young children. The religious teaching is perhaps rather more familiarly introduced than suits our taste, but it is amusingly written, and prettily illustrated.

"Marion's Path: through Shadow to Sunshine." By Mary Weeke. (E. Marlborough and Co.) The story of a child left by her parents, who are in India, to the care of friends in England. Through considerable mortifications, the effects of early indulgence are redeemed before she joins her parents abroad. The story is nicely worked out.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



MORTIMER LIGHTWOOD. In answer to your first inquiry, "Florence Adams" writes to say that "General Reid was an amateur musician who founded a professorship of music in the University of Edinburgh, and in whose honour a concert is given every year at the Choral Union, always commencing with the march mentioned, both words and music of which were his composition." (2) The Jacobite song, "Carlisle Yetts," can be found in any of the large collections of Scotch music, very probably in Blackie's "Scottish Minstrelsy." (3) Several correspondents reply that the quotation is from "Childe Harold," 3rd Canto, 26th verse, and runs thus—

"And wild and high the 'Cameron's gathering'
rose!"

(4) "Mary E. R. Martin" says that the German lines you asked about are in a poem by Tieck.

"L. S. W." "A Flat Iron for a Farthing" commenced in our number for November, 1870.

"A Constant Reader." Four correspondents reply that the quotation from Shakespeare runs thus: "And then to *breakfast* with what appetite you have." Henry VIII., Act 3, Scene 2.

"Cluster Rose." The version of the Monk and Bird Legend from which you quoted is in Longfellow's "Golden Legend," Part 2, lines 71 to 73.

"Nora Creina." The "Palm Tree" is in "Poems by Mrs. Hemans," 1 vol., Blackwood and Co. Aunt Judy is ashamed to own she did not recollect that both the quotations you asked for were from the Poet Laureate; but it is difficult to recognise the best of one's friends when administered in such ho-

mœopathically small quantities. The first is from "A Dirge," and was misprinted; it is—

"Shadows of the silver birch
Sweep the green that folds thy grave."

The second, from "Cenone," verse 13, line 4.

"F. J. G." asks if there is any weekly or monthly publication as a help to coin collectors, similar to the "Stamp Collector's Magazine?"

"Maud." A bookseller is the most likely person to apply to for the book of legends you ask about. Aunt Judy must advise you also to devote some attention to the simple art of spelling. Your note of ten lines contained five mistakes.

"Fatima" has two French books, nearly new, "Le Blocus," 2s. 6d., and "Histoire d'un Paysan," 5s., which she would like to exchange for any French or German stories. Address with the Editor.

"M. H. D." has written a story in verse, which she believes might be advantageously dramatized in the style of "Beauty and the Beast," for drawing-room performance. She would be grateful if any of our correspondents would tell her of any one who arranges stories for acting, to whom she might send it. She would rather not attempt the necessary alterations herself, as any one accustomed to compose dramas for children would do it so much better.

"Ada Fothergill" offers "six times as many old postage stamps for any crests or monograms" our readers are willing to send in exchange. Address, Abernaut House, Aberdare, Glamorgan-shire.

"Mrs. Inkpen." Pulleyn's "Etymological Compendium" gives the following

account of drinking healths: "Different are the versions that relate to the antiquity of this custom. The ancient Greeks and Romans used at their meals to make libations, pour out and even to drink wine in honour of the gods. The first health we hear of in history is, however, ascribed (in the words of the story) to the pertinent and sensible Rowena, a beautiful daughter of Hengist, general of the Saxons, who, having the Isle of Thanet given him by Vortigern, for assisting him against the Picts and Scots, obtained as much ground as he could encompass with an ox's hide to build a castle; which, being completed, he invited Vortigern to supper. After the entertainment, Hengist called his daughter Rowena, who entered with great dignity and magnificence, carrying a golden bowl, full of wine, in her hand, out of which she drank, and in the Saxon language said, 'Be of health, Lord King!' To this Vortigern replied, 'Drink health!' The story adds, that Vortigern, enamoured with Rowena's beauty, married her in a short time after, and gave her father the whole kingdom of Kent.

'Health, my Lord King, the sweet Rowena said,
Health, cried the chieftain, to the Saxon maid;
Then gaily rose, and 'midst the concourse wide,
Kissed her pale lips, and placed her by his side.
At the soft scene such gentle thoughts abound,
That health and kisses 'mongst the guests went round;

From this the social custom took its rise
We still retain, and must for ever prize."

The use of the word *toast* in connection with this custom arose from the habit of putting a toasted biscuit, or piece of bread, in the bowls of liquor, which is still a favourite addition to many old English drinks, though it is no longer an ingredient of punch. Aunt Judy does not think that there is a *sequel* to the tale you ask about, though Messrs. Nisbet (Berners Street, London) have published several works by the same author.

"Francesca." Skating was first introduced into England from Holland, at an early period, and the Dutch introduced it from Lapland. Can any of our readers say where the following lines can be found?—

"Active deer, noble liver,
Strong to labour, sure to conquer."

"F. M. H." Wheeler's "Dictionary of Noted Names" gives the following reply to your first inquiry: "Rowland, one of the most famous of Charlemagne's twelve peers. To give one 'A Rowland for an Oliver' is an old and proverbial expression, used to signify the matching of one incredible lie with another. Oliver was also one of Charlemagne's Paladins: and the exploits of these renowned heroes are rendered ridiculously and equally extravagant by the old romancers." (2) "*Heaven* is derived from the Anglo-Saxon verb *Heaf-ian*, to raise, because it is placed on high, or because we raise our eyes to contemplate it. *Rest*, that upon which anything *resteth*; from Anglo-Saxon *restan*, to stay or remain, and, thus, to be or become quiet." (Richardson's Dictionary of the English Language.)

"Puck" asks if anyone can recommend him a book on the management of pets, which contains instructions for the keeping of *white mice*?

"Fido" would like to know where he can find the following lines:

"Kilmeny, Kilmeny, where have you been?
Kilmeny looked up with a lovely grace,
But no smile was seen on Kilmeny's face;
As still was her look, and as still was her e'e,
As the stillness that lay on the emerald lea,
Or the mist that sleeps on a waveless sea.
For Kilmeny had been she kenned not where,
And Kilmeny had seen what she could not declare."

"Little Wilhelmina." Aunt Judy thinks the line you ask for may be from "Trust in God," a hymn in the second series of the "Lyra Germanica."

"The night is come, wherein at last we rest."

"Piggie." *Barmecide* is the Persian name of a noble family, who ranked second to the royal houses only, throughout all Asia. "Ina" gives some further particulars on page 91 of the *Burlesque*. The second quotation you ask for is from verse 3 of Campbell's "Mariners of England." Perhaps some of our readers will tell you where the other verses are to be found :

- (1) "Oh, when shall English men
With such deeds fill a pen,
Or England breed again
Such a King Harry !"
- (2) "Tis true I perish, yet I perish great.
Yes, in a mighty deed I shall expire.
Let future ages hear it and admire !"
- (3) "Being everything that now thou art,
Be nothing that thou art not.
So with the world, thy simple ways,
Thy grace, thy more than beauty,
Shall be an endless theme of praise
And love, a simple duty."

"Katie." No doubt the term "short commons" originates in a student at the University being served at his dinner with less meat than he is entitled to receive from the cook. His order is for a "commons" or "half commons" of beef or mutton. He is himself a "commoner." Dr. Johnson seems to favour this interpretation. "Katie" asks in which of Shakespeare's plays the words, "To witch the world with lovely music," occur?

"Mayroc." "Undine" is not a *poem*, but the first of four romances, entitled "The Seasons," by Baron de la Motte Fouqué. You can easily obtain a translation from any bookseller.

"Undine." *Anon* is a contraction of *anonymous*, i.e., *without a name*.

"Charlotte." "Mission Work" was published by Mr. Macintosh, 24, Paternoster Row, who will give you the information you require.

"Pax" has a large number of postage stamps, which he will be glad to send to any of our correspondents who require

them for making a stamp snake, on condition that they pay for the transmission. Address with the Editor.

"Dolly" offers fifty different crests and monograms in exchange for five rare foreign stamps. Address, 1, Primrose Hill Road, Adelaide Road, N.W.

"Miss Moucher."—The S. P. C. K. will furnish you with a large supply of the kind of story-books you require. Messrs. Mozley also have published several by the author of the "Heir of Redclyffe," which we can highly recommend: "Ben Sylvester's Word," "The Christmas Mummings," &c. Can our readers inform "Miss Moucher" where to find the following lines?—

"Die Masse Könt ihr nur durch Masse zwingen."

"That touches me with meptic gleams,
Like glimpses of forgotten dreams."

"Rose of York" asks if any of our readers will supply her with a copy of the lines commencing—

"Call us not weeds—we are flowers of the sea."

She *thinks* they are by Mrs. Hemans. Address, Kirby Knowle Rectory, Thirsk.

"Mabel" offers a stamp snake for sale. Price 5s. or anything worth that sum. Address, M. F., Lamoran, near Probus.

The "Peace-Egg" alluded to in Mrs. Ewing's tale is published by J. Johnson, bookseller, &c., Kirkgate, Leeds. It is the Yorkshire version of an old mumming play, which lingers under various traditional forms in many parts of England. It is not suitable for private theatricals.—J. H. F.

"Mrs. Warde," "Little Wilhelmina," and "Amy." There are no means for the sale of fancy articles, or indeed of any articles of clothing at the hospital; but clothing of all kinds suitable for children, between the ages of four and ten years—as under-clothing for girls,

small sized skirts, and flannel shirts for boys, also scarlet flannel jackets for Cot use—are always acceptable. Boys' clothing also, as jackets, trousers, or waist-coats, of any size, and cloth or stuff-caps for out-of-door use, are in great demand, during the winter time, warm knitted stockings or socks, comforters, and muffatees, are a great boon for the little ones. The Secretary will very gladly supply patterns for the scarlet bed-jackets to any members of the proposed Working Society who desire to have them.

"Daisy," "Mabel and Anna," and "H. Dewhurst." The Skye terrier "Jim," referred to in the report of "Aunt Judy's Cot" last month, is still living, but his mistress having removed to Leamington, he is now installed in a new kennel there. He maintains his good character for gentleness and attachment to children, and has recently sat to a photographer for his portrait.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, December 16th, 1871.

Annie H— has, under the blessing of God on the means used, so far recovered, as to leave the Hospital a very different child from the *cripple Annie* who entered it last August; she still continues to wear certain supports for the limbs, called "splints," and has to lie quiet on a little sofa, kindly given her by a lady. About ten days after her return home, she was brought to the Hospital for inspection of the limb; her mother said she had been counting all the days until the date appointed for her visit, and it is difficult to tell whether her old companions or herself were most delighted; the only tears shed were when her father came to carry her home again. She is now looking forward to being one of a party of young visitors, invited at Christmas time to join the annual Christmas Tree.

The little girl who has succeeded to the envied "Aunt Judy's Cot." is suffering from a similar complaint to that of Annie. She is little more than a baby, and is a very bright and lively child. She is called "Toby," and is a model of patience under suffering; one operation has already been performed on her leg, but she soon recovered her baby words, and has a smile for every one who approaches. She seems quite content to remain in bed, which is fortunate, as entire rest and quiet are indispensable for her.

The approaching completion of the fourth year of the establishment of "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot" affords an opportunity of rendering an account of the progress of the fund for its permanent support, and also of recounting the Patients who have been referred to from month to month in the "Cot" reports; these are:

- 1st. George F—.
- 2nd. Mary Anne T—.
- 3rd. Annie H—.
- 4th. Toby.

Being a smaller number than in any previous year, which is due to the long periods during which George F— and little Annie H— were under treatment. The last-named little girl, Toby, being, as above stated, the present occupant of the Cot; making a total of twenty-four patients since its establishment.

The total amount of Contributions received and acknowledged in the monthly lists since last January is as follows:

	£	s.	d.
Donations	186	1	9
Annual Subscriptions	17	13	1
	203	14	10

The Annual Subscriptions being steadily kept up to very nearly the total received during last year, as will be seen from the following return:

	£	s.	d.
1868	20	0	6
1869	18	12	6
1870	18	2	6
1871	17	13	1

The general Donations amount to nearly the same sum as given last year, and the gross total nearly equals that of 1870—the amounts received in the several years being as follows:—

	£	s.	d.
1868	258	18	0
1869	278	18	3
1870	206	12	1
1871	203	14	10

Total received } £948 3 2
during 4 years }

£948 contributed chiefly in comparatively small sums, the majority of the givers being *children*, is truly a most gratifying and encouraging result. The whole may not inaptly be characterized as "Children's Freewill Offerings" to aid their suffering sisters and brothers.

Since the formation of the Cot Fund in 1868 (when little "Margaret" was admitted), twenty-four patients have been under treatment for diseases, all more or less serious. One case only (as referred to in the last Christmas Report) terminated fatally. The personal interest exhibited by many of the contributors to the Cot has been very gratifying, and the evident pleasure afforded, both to the visitors and the visited, is specially interesting, being very different from preconceived notions of visiting the sick: instances of self-denial in order to afford pleasure to others are frequent, and it is hoped that an influence for good is exerted which is not easily effaced.

The contributions, as in former years, have come from young readers in almost every part of the world. An acknowledgment is sent by post to every contribution (when an address is supplied), but a large number of donations are sent anonymously. The managers therefore

desire to avail themselves of this opportunity of tendering their best thanks to each individual contributor, and again to renew their expressions of obligation to the Editor of "Aunt Judy's Magazine," for her invaluable aid in devoting so much attention to the personal supervision of the fund.

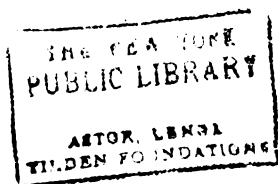
SAMUEL WHITFORD, *Secretary*.

December 16th, 1871.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to December 16th, 1871.

	£	s.	d.
Maude and Mildred (monthly)	0	2	0
G. A. F. (five months' subscription to end of December).	0	11	8
John Adams, 37, Harrington Square (monthly)	0	1	0
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	1	0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
M. A. F. (monthly)	0	0	6
M. A. F. (collected)	0	5	0
T. W. A. (monthly)	0	0	6
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Maude and Mildred (monthly)	0	2	0
A. S. Bedford (collected)	0	8	6
C. S.	1	0	0
Mrs. A. H. Carfield	1	0	0
Bessie and Edith, Langmore, Teddington	0	10	0
"Restless Alice, 3d., her doll, 1d., Gloucester Gate	0	0	4
Joanna Blaikie, Canon Lodge, Stonehaven	0	4	6
The Boys of the Preparatory School, Rossall	0	5	6
Nellie Howlett, for Little Annie	0	2	6
Lucy Robinson, Lovely Hall, Blackburn	0	2	0
Gertrude Gwynn, Great Marlow, Bucks	0	1	0
Mrs. and Maud Robinson, 4, Cranley Place, Onslow Square;			
"Fees"	0	2	0
Effie, 4s. 6d., Meta, 1s., Dusty, 1s., Pepper, 1d., Puck, 1d.	0	6	8

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Ethel Grindrod, Chester . . .	0	1	0	Harold, 5s. 4d., Maud, 4s. 3d., a			
J. C., 6d., E. W., 6d., E. M. Smith,				Christmas gift, earned by			
6d., Eleanor Frances Smith, 6d.,				singing	0	9	7
Percy Leger Smith, 6d., Emily				William Rufus, 2s., Kavock, 1s.,			
Graves, 6d., Beatrice Bar-				Mamma, 1s., Black Tuss, 6d.,			
naby, 6d., Pupils at Miss Cole-				Nobody, 6d.	0	5	0
gate's School, Bridge, near				Fay	0	2	0
Canterbury.	0	3	6	Margaret, Dora, Mabel, and			
Stalkey Jack, 2½d., Blinking				little Maud Hammersley,			
Bill, 2d.	0	0	½	4, Cromwell Gardens	0	4	0
G. M. G. Chalmers	0	1	0	Rosie, Florrie, and Emmie, Hen-			
G. B. A., The Grange, Welwyn 0	3	0		bury Court, near Bristol			
Fearne and Donald MacStrathie 0	0	6		(collected)	0	10	0
Harry, Margaret, and Tom, Lea-				From the Girls at Derby House,			
mington	0	7	4	Gipsy Hill	2	4	8
F. C. E. O., Highgate	0	2	6	Gertrude Smith	0	5	0
Despina, Marigo, and Julia,				Lily and Arthur, Haileybury . .	0	7	0
Worth, Sussex	0	5	0	Ethel Lucas, collected in a box			
Nellie, Flax Bourton	0	2	6	on the drawing-room table, .			
"Pig-face and Minnie the cat" 0	0	6		11, Westbourne Terrace . . .	1	5	0
Violet F. J. Madden, Boslea				Amy (collected)	1	0	0
Manor	0	5	0	Collected by Bertha and Beatrice			
Nelly's Money-box, Aberdare . .	2	9	0	Lockhart, Winton Square,			
Isabel	0	1	6	Stoke-on-Trent; Mrs. Pam-			
C. F. Swabey, Langley Marish,				philon, 4s., Mrs. Cooper, 2s.,			
Slough (collected)	1	2	6	Mrs. Lockhart, 2s. 4d., Mrs.			
M. S. W. (collected)	0	6	0	Rose, 1s., Emma, 1s., Bertha			
Emily, Fannie, and Lottie Pattin-				and Baby, 2s.	0	12	4
son, Laxton Vicarage	0	3	0	Nelly, 2s. 6d., Gilbert, 2s. 6d.,			
"The Christmas Greeting" from				Austyn, 2s. 6d., Ethel, 2s. 6d.,			
some little ones at Fletton,				with a quilt, and some dolls . .	0	10	0
Peterborough	0	5	0	Maud's Great-uncle	0	2	0
Amy, "a Fee"	0	1	0	Sarah, Benny, and Kate			
Mamma, 2s. 6d., Papa, 2s. 6d.,				Brierley, Rochdale, with some			
Mary Bel, 2s., Jannie, 2s., with				Christmas cards	0	4	0
a Scrap-book from Jane Eliza				Nina, Alice, and Annie	0	3	0
Waters, Glenthorne, Graves-				The Little Feilda, St. Peters-			
end	0	9	0	burgh (collected)	1	11	6
"Six Grumbletonians, one penny				"An admirer of Aunt Judy's			
each"	0	0	6	Magazine," Comforters for			
Dodo, 3s., Old Hen, 2s. 6d.,				little Annie, and any little			
Weenie, 1s., Smiler, 6d.,				friend she wishes to give one to.			
Rattie, 1s.	0	8	0	"Fanny, with her best wishes,			
"Princess Elsie and her maids				five small comforters for five			
of honour"	1	2	0	small girls," Ormskirk.			
A Christmas present from				The Misses Hawkina, a parcel of			
"Cory"	0	2	6	small books.			
Mamma, Ella, and Gwendoline 0	5	0		Francesca, a Christmas card.			
F. L., a very old friend of Aunt				Grace, Selina, and Alleyne, a			
Judy's, £1, Herbert, Lucy,				large supply of dolls and			
Ronald, and Lilian, 10s.,				other toys, and a doll for			
Scarborough	1	10	0	Annie to take home with her,			
Everybody's Tottie and Guy . .	0	2	0	Janet Thompson, a case of			
Harry Duff, Bangor	0	1	0	pictures.			
Harry Chapman, Canterbury . .	0	0	6	Amy, 6 "Nightingales."			





SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER IV.

THE BULLERS.—MARIA TAKES ME UP.—WE FALL OUT.



MAJOR BULLER took me home to his house after my father's death. My father had left his affairs in his hands, and, in those of a friend in England—the Mr. Arkwright he had spoken of. I believe they were both trustees under my mother's marriage settlement.

The Bullers were relations of mine. Mrs. Buller was my mother's cousin. She was a kind-hearted, talkative lady, and good-looking, though no longer very young. She dressed as gaily as my poor mother, though, somehow, not with quite so good an effect. She copied my mother's style, and sometimes wore things exactly similar to hers; but the result was not the same. I have heard Mrs. Minchin say that my mother took a malicious pleasure, at times, in wearing costumes that would have been most trying to beauty less radiant and youthful than hers, for the fun of seeing "poor Theresa" appear in a similar garb with less success. But Mrs. Minchin's tales had always a sting in them!

Mrs. Buller received me very kindly. She kissed me, and told me to call her "Aunt Theresa," which I did ever afterwards. Aunt Theresa's daughters and I were like sisters. They showed me their best frocks, and told me exactly all that had been ordered in the parcel that was coming out from England.

"Don't you have your hair put in papers?" said Maria, whose own curls sat stiffly round her head as regularly as the rolls of a lawyer's wig. "Are your socks like lace? Doesn't your Ayah dress you every afternoon?"

Maria "took me up." She was four years older than I was, which entitled her to blend patronage with her affection for me. In the evening of the day on which I went to the Bullers, she took me by the hand, and tossing her curls, said, "I have taken you up, Margery Vandaleur. Mrs. Minchin told mamma that she has taken the bride up. I heard her say that the bride was a sweet little puss, only so childish. That's just what Mrs. Minchin said. I heard her. And I

shall say so of you, too, as I've taken you up. You're a sweet little puss. And of course you're childish, because you're a child," adds Miss Maria, with an air. For had not she begun to write her age with two figures?

Had I known then as much as I learned afterwards of what it meant to be "taken up" by Mrs. Minchin, I might not have thought the comparison a good omen for my friendship with Maria. To be hotly taken up by Mrs. Minchin meant an equally hot quarrel at no very distant date. The squabble with the bride was not slow to come, but Maria and I fell out first. I think she was tyrannical, and I know I was peevish. My Ayah spoilt me; I spoke very broken English, and by no means understood all that the Bullers said to me; besides which, I was feverishly unhappy at intervals about my father.

It was two months before Mrs. Minchin found out that her sweet little puss was a deceitful little cat; but at the end of two days I had offended Maria, and we plunged into a war of words such as children wage when they squabble.

"I won't show you any more of my dresses," said Maria.

"I've seen them all," I boldly asserted; and the stroke told.

"You don't know that," said Maria.

"Yes, I do."

"No, you don't."

"Well, show me the others then."

"No, that I won't."

"I don't care."

"I've got a blue silk coming out from England," Maria continued, "but you haven't."

"I've got a pink silk here," said I, "and pink shoes."

"Ah, but you can't wear them now your papa's dead," said Maria; "mamma says you will have to wear black for twelve months."

I am sure Maria did not mean to be cruel, but this blow cut me deeply. I remember the tide of misery that seemed to flood over my mind, to this day. I was miserable because my father was dead, and I could not go to him for comfort. I was miserable because I was out of temper, and Maria had had the best of the quarrel. I was miserable—poor little wretch!—because I could not wear my pink silk, now my father was dead. I put my hands to my eyes, and screaming "Papa! papa!" I rushed out into the verandah.

As I ran out, some one ran in; we struck against each other, and Bustle and I rolled over on to the floor. In a moment more I was in Mr. Abercrombie's arms, and sobbing out my woes to him.

I am sorry to say that he swore rather loudly when he heard what Maria had said, and I fancy that he lectured her when I had gone to Ayah, for she came to me presently, and begged my pardon. Of course we were at once as friendly as before. Many another breach has there been between us since then, hastily made and quickly healed. But the bride and Mrs. Minchin never came to terms.

"Mr. George" remained my devoted friend. I looked for him as I used to look for my father. The first time I saw him after I came to the Bullers was on the day of my father's funeral. He was there, and came back with Major Buller. I was on Mr. George's knee in a moment, with my hand through the crape upon his sleeve. The Major slowly unfastened his sword-belt, and laid it down with a sigh, saying, "We've lost a good man, Abercrombie, and a true friend."

"You don't know what a friend to me," said Mr. George, impetuously. "Why, look here, sir. A month or two ago I'd outrun the constable—I always am getting into a mess of some sort—and Vandaleur found it out and lent me the money."

"You're not the first youngster he has helped by many, to my knowledge," said Major Buller.

"But that's not all, sir," said Mr. George, standing up with me in his arms. "When we first went in that night, you remember his speaking privately to me once? Well, what he said was, 'I think I'm following the rest, Abercrombie, and I wanted to speak to you about this.' He had got my I.O.U. in his hand, and he tore it across, and said, 'Don't bother any more about it, but keep straight, my boy, if you can, for your people's sake.' I'm sadly given to going crooked, sir, but if anything could make a fellow——"

Mr. George got no farther in his sentence, but the Major seemed to understand what he meant, for he spoke very kindly to him, and they left me for a bit and walked up and down the verandah together. Just before Mr. George left, I heard him say, "Have you heard anything of Mrs. Vandaleur?"

"I wrote to her, in the best fashion that I could," said Major Buller. "But there's no breaking rough news gently, Abercrombie. I ought to hear from her soon."

But he never did hear from her. My poor mother had fled from the cholera only to fall a victim to fever. The news of my father's death was, I believe, the immediate cause of the relapse in which she died.

And so I became an orphan.

Shortly afterwards the regiment was ordered home, and the Bullers took me with them.

CHAPTER V.

SALES.—MATTERS OF PRINCIPLE.—MRS. MINCHIN QUARRELS WITH THE BRIDE.—

MRS. MINCHIN QUARRELS WITH EVERYBODY.—MRS. MINCHIN IS RECONCILED.—THE VOYAGE HOME.—A DEATH ON BOARD.

I ONLY remember a little of our voyage home in the troop-ship, but I have heard so much of it, from the elder Buller girls and the ladies of the regiment, that I seem quite familiar with all that happened; and I hardly know now what I remember myself, and what has been recalled or suggested to me by hearing the other ladies talk.

There was no lack of subjects for talk when the news came that the regiment was ordered home. As Aunt Theresa repeatedly remarked, "There are a great many things to be considered." And she considered them all day long—by word of mouth.

The Colonel (that is, the new Colonel—he had just returned from leave in the hills) and his wife behaved rather shabbily, we thought. "But," as Mrs. Minchin said, "what could you expect? They say she was the daughter of a wholesale draper in the City. And trade in the blood always peeps out." We knew for certain that before ever there was a word said about the regiment going home it had been settled that the Colonel's wife should go to England, where her daughters were being educated, and take the two youngest children with her. Her passage in the mail-steamer was all but taken, if not quite. And then, when they heard of the troop-ship, she stayed to go home in that. "Money can be no object to them," said Mrs. Minchin, "for one of the City people belonging to her has died lately, and left her—I can't tell you how many thousands. Indeed, they've heaps of money, and now he's got the regiment he ought to retire. And I must say, I think it's very hard on you, dear Mrs. Buller. With all your family, senior officer's wife's accommodation would be little enough, for a long voyage."

"Which is no reason why my wife should have better accommoda-

tion than she is entitled to, more than any other lady on board," observed Uncle Buller. "The Quartermaster's wife has more children than we have, and you know how much room she will get."

"Quartermaster's wife!" muttered Mrs. Minchin. "She would have been accommodated with the women of the regiment if we had gone home three months ago" (at which time Quartermaster Curling was still only a sergeant).

Uncle Buller made no reply. He was not fond of Mrs. Minchin, and he never disputed a point with her.

One topic of the day was "sales." We all had to sell off what we did not want to take home, and the point was to choose the right moment for doing so.

"I shan't be the first," said Aunt Theresa, decidedly. "The first sales are always failures, somehow. People are depressed. Then they know that there are plenty more to come, and they hang back. But farther on, people have just got into an extravagant humour, and would go bargain-hunting to fifty sales a day. Later still, they find out that they've got all they want."

"And a great deal that they don't want," put in Uncle Buller.

"Which is all the same thing," said Aunt Theresa. "So I shall sell about the middle." Which she did, demanding her friends' condolences beforehand on the way in which her goods and chattels would be "given away," and receiving their congratulations afterwards upon the high prices that they fetched.

To do Aunt Theresa justice, if she was managing, she was quite honest.

[Eleanor is shocked by some of the things I say about people in our own rank of life. She believes that certain vulgar vices, such as dishonesty, cheating, lying, gluttony, petty gossip, malicious mischief-making, and loud quarrels amongst women, are confined to the lower orders, or, as she wisely and kindly phrases it, to people who know no better. She laughs at me, and I laugh at myself, when I say (to support my own views) that I know more of the world than she does. Since what I know of the world beyond this happy corner of it I learned when I was a mere child. But though we laugh, I can remember a good deal. I have heard polished gentlemen lie, at a pinch, like the proverbial pick-pocket, and pretty ladies fib as readily as servant girls. Of course, I do not mean to say that as many ladies

as servant girls tell untruths. But Eleanor would fain believe that the lie which Solomon discovered to be "continually on the lips of the untaught" is not on the lips of those who "know better" at all. As to dishonesty, too, I should be sorry to say that customers cheat as much as shopkeepers, but I do think that many people who ought to "know better" seem to forget that their honour as well as their interest is concerned in every bargain. The question then arises, do people in our rank know so much better on these points of moral conduct than those below them? If Eleanor and her parents are "old-fashioned" (and the boys think us quite behind the times), I fancy that high principle and a nice sense of honour are not so well taught now as they used to be. "Noble sentiments" are not the fashion. The very phrase provokes a smile of ridicule. But I do not know whether the habit of uttering ignoble ones in "chaff" does not at last bring the tone of mind down to the same level. It is so terribly easy to be mean, and covetous, and selfish, and cowardly untrue, if the people by whose good opinion one's character lives will comfortably confess that they also "look out for themselves," and "take care of Number One," and think "money's the great thing in this world," and hold "the social lie" to be a necessary part of social intercourse. I know that once or twice it has happened that young people with whom we have been thrown have said things which have made high-principled Eleanor stand aghast in honourable horror; and that that speechless indignation of hers has been as much lost upon them as the touch of a feather on the hide of a rhinoceros. Eleanor is more impatient than I am on such subjects. I, who have been trained in more than one school myself, am sorry for those who have never known the higher teaching. Eleanor thinks that modesty, delicacy of mind and taste, and uprightness in word and deed, are innate in worthy characters. Where she finds them absent, she is apt to dilate her nostrils, and say, in that low, emphatic voice which is her excited tone, "There are some things that you cannot *put into* anybody!" and so turn her back for ever on the offender. Or, as she once said to a friend of the boys, who was staying with us, in the heat of argument, "I suppose that honourable men, like poets, are born, not made." I, indeed, do believe these qualities to be in great measure inherited; but I believe them also to come of training, and to be more easily lost than Eleanor will allow. She has only lived in one moral atmosphere. I think that the

standard of a family or a social circle falls but too easily; and in all humbleness of mind, I say that I have reason to believe that in this respect, as in other matters, elevation and amendment are possible.

However, this is one of the many subjects we discuss, rocking and pacing the kitchen to the howling of the wind. We have confessed that our experience is very small, and our opinions still unfixed in the matter, so it is unlikely that I shall settle it to my own, or anybody's satisfaction, in the pages of this biography.]

To return to Aunt Theresa. She was, as I said, honest. She chose a good moment for our sale; but she did not "doctor" the things. For the credit of the regiment, I feel ashamed to confess that everybody was not so scrupulous. One lady sat in our drawing-room, with twenty-five pounds' worth of lace upon her dress, and congratulated herself on having sold some toilette-china as sound, of which she had daintily doctored two fractures with an invaluable cement. The pecuniary gain may have been half-a-crown. The loss in self-respect she did not seem to estimate. Aunt Theresa would not have done it herself, but she laughed encouragingly. It is difficult to be strait-laced with a lady who has so much old point, and whose silks are so stiff that she can rustle down your remonstrances. Another friend, a young officer whose personal extravagance was a proverb even at a station in India, boasted for a week of having sold a rickety knick-knack shelf to a man who was going off to the hills for five-and-twenty shillings when it was not worth six. I have heard him swear at tailors, servants, and subordinates of all kinds, for cheating. I do not think it ever dawned upon his mind that common honesty was a virtue in which he himself was wanting. As to Mrs. Minchin's tales on this subject—but Mrs. Minchin's tales were not to be relied upon.

It was about this time that Mrs. Minchin and the bride quarrelled. In a few weeks after her arrival, the bride knew all the ladies of the regiment and the society of the station, and then showed little inclination to be bear-led by Mrs. Minchin. She met that terrible lady so smartly on one occasion that she retired, worsted, for the afternoon, and the bride drove triumphantly round the place, and called on all her friends, looking as soft as a Chinchilla muff, and dropping at every bungalow the tale of something that Mrs. Minchin had said, by no means to the advantage of the inmates.

It was in this way that Aunt Theresa came to know what Mrs. Minchin had said about her wearing half-mourning for my father and mother. That she knew better than to go into deep black, which is trying to indefinite complexions, but was equal to any length of grief in those lavenders, and delicate combinations of black and white, which are so becoming to everybody, especially to people who are not quite so young as they have been.

In the warmth of her own indignation at these unwarrantable remarks, and of the bride's ready sympathy, Aunt Theresa felt herself in candour bound to reveal what Mrs. Minchin had told her about the bride's having sold a lot of her wedding presents at the sale for fancy prices; they being new-fashioned ornaments, and so forth, not yet to be got at the station.

The result of this general information all round was, of course, a quarrel between Mrs. Minchin and nearly every lady in the regiment. The bride had not failed to let "the Colonel's lady" know what Mrs. Minchin thought of her going home in the troop-ship, and had made a call upon the Quartermaster's wife for the pleasure of making her acquainted with Mrs. Minchin's warm wish that the regiment had been ordered home three months sooner, when Mrs. Curling and the too numerous little Curlings would not have been entitled to intrude upon the ladies' cabin.

And yet, strange to say, before we were half way to England, Mrs. Minchin was friendly once more with all but the bride; and the bride was at enmity with every lady on board. The truth is, Mrs. Minchin, though a gossip of the deepest dye, was kind-hearted, after a fashion. Her restless energy, which chiefly expended itself in petty social plots, and the fomentation of quarrels, was not seldom employed also in practical kindness towards those who happened to be in favour with her. She was really interested—for good or for evil—in those with whose affairs she meddled, and if she was a dangerous enemy, and a yet more dangerous friend, she was neither selfish nor illiberal.

The bride, on the other hand, had no real interest whatever in anybody's affairs but her own, and combined in the highest degree those qualities of personal extravagance, and general meanness, which not unfrequently go together.

A long voyage is no small test of temper; and it was a situation in which Mrs. Minchin's best qualities shone. It was proportionably

unfavourable to those of the bride. Her maid was sick, and she was slovenly. She was sick herself, and then her selfishness and discontent knew no check. The other ladies bore their own little troubles, and helped each other; but under the peevish egotism of the bride, her warmest friends revolted. It was then that Mrs. Minchin resumed her sway amongst us.

With Aunt Theresa she was soon reconciled. Mrs. Buller's memory was always hazy, both in reference to what she said herself, and to what was said to her. She was too good-natured to strain it to recall past grievances. Her indignation had not lasted much beyond that afternoon in which the bride scattered discord among her acquaintances. She had relieved herself by outpouring the tale of Mrs. Minchin's treachery to Uncle Buller, and then taking him warmly to task for the indifference with which he heard her wrongs; and had ended by laughing heartily when he compared the probable encounter between Mrs. Minchin and the bride to the deadly struggles of two quarrelsome "praying-mantises" in his collection.

[Major Buller was a naturalist, and took home some rare and beautiful specimens of Indian insects.]

It was an outbreak of sickness amongst the little Curlings that led to the reconciliation with the Quartermaster's wife. Neither her kindness of heart nor her love of managing other folks' matters would permit Mrs. Minchin to be passive then. She made the first advances, and poor Mrs. Curling gratefully responded.

"I'm sure, Mrs. Minchin," said she, "I don't wonder at any one thinking the children would be in the way, poor dears. But of course, as Curling said——"

"God bless you, my good woman," Mrs. Minchin broke in. "Don't let us go back to that. We all know pretty well what Mrs. Seymour's made of, now. Let's go to the children. I'm as good a sick nurse as most people, and if you keep up your heart we'll pull them all through before we get to the Cape."

But with all her zeal (and it did not stop short of a quarrel with the surgeon), and all her devotion, which never slackened, Mrs. Minchin did not "pull them all through."

We were just off the Cape when Arthur Curling died. He was my own age, and in the beginning of the voyage we had been playfellows. Of all the children who swarmed on deck to the distraction of (at

least) the unmarried officers of the regiment, he had been the noisiest and merriest. He made fancy ships in corners, to which he admitted the other children as fancy passengers, or fancy ship's officers of various grades. Once he employed a dozen of us to haul at a rope as if we were "heaving the log." Owing to an unexpected coil, it slackened suddenly, and we all fell over one another at the feet of two young officers who were marching up and down, arm-in-arm, absorbed in conversation. Their anger was loud as well as deep, but it did not deter Arthur Curling from further exploits, or stop his ceaseless chatter about what he would do when he was a man and the captain of a vessel.

He did not live to be either the one or the other. Some very rough weather off the Cape was fatal to him at a critical point in his illness. How Mrs. Minchin contrived to keep her own feet and to nurse the poor boy as she did was a marvel. He died on her knees. The weather had been rough up to the time of his death, but it was a calm lovely morning on which his body was "committed to the deep." The ship's bell tolled at daybreak, and all the ladies but the bride were with poor Mrs. Curling at the funeral. Mrs. Seymour lay in her berth, and whined complaints of "that horrid bell." She displayed something between an interesting terror and a shrewish anger because there was "a body on board." When she said that the Curlings ought to be thankful to have one child less to provide for, the other ladies hurried indignantly from the cabin.

The early morning air was fresh and mild. The sea and sky were grey, but peaceful. The decks were freshly washed. The sailors in various parts of the ship uncovered their heads. The Colonel and several officers were present. I had earnestly begged to be there also, and finding Mr. George, I stood with my hand in his.

Mrs. Curling's grief had passed the point of tears. She had no shed one since the boy died, though Mrs. Minchin had tried hard to move her to the natural relief of weeping. She only stood in silent agony, though the Quartermaster's cheeks were wet, and most of the ladies sobbed aloud.

As the little coffin slid over the hatchway into the quiet sea, the sun rose, and a long level beam covered the place where the body went down.

Then, with a sudden cry, the mother burst into tears.

(To be continued.)

A CONGRATULATION.



FINE is the life most valued
 Throughout the broad domains
 O'er which our Queen Victoria,
 Thy mother, wisely reigns,
 O Prince, so lately lying
 Close at the door of death,
 Waiting his icy hand put forth
 To draw away thy breath.

Unseen by those most near thee—
 Queen mother, royal wife—
 An angel was beside thy bed,
 Shielding thy precious life;
 Kind minister of healing,
 Sent in reply to prayer,
 That rose, like mist of morning,
 Both here and everywhere.

No grief since *her** departure,
 Heir of proud England's crown,
 Has equall'd the wide sympathy
 Of country and of town;
 From lands remote, and differing creeds,
 And all the tribes of men,
 The supplication heaven-ward went,
 "Restore the Prince again!"

Ah, what a trust for one to hold,
 A life so dear as thine!
 More valued than the rarest gem
 Dug from the wealthiest mine;
 Hope of a people who revere
 Thy mother's ancient throne,
 Repay, O Prince, by noble life,
 The loyalty they've shown.

ALFRED GATTY, D.D.

* The Princess Charlotte died 6th November, 1817.

SNAKE YARNS.



SUPPOSE that there are no living things of which people are inclined to have such a horror as reptiles, and of all reptiles, perhaps snakes are those which, from various reasons, have acquired the worst reputation. Most people who have never had opportunities of seeing them alive except in a zoological collection, or dead except preserved in bottles like pickled cabbage, have heard stories about them generally to their disadvantage.

In England, as you know, or ought to know, there are no reptiles that can be called deadly; the common English snake is quite harmless, although ignorant common people are prejudiced against it, and lose no opportunity of taking its life. Walking on country roads in the summer months, you may easily guess this from the number of specimens which you find crushed upon the ground. The bite of the adder or viper, though troublesome and painful, only proves fatal in rare cases, and I should say that even in these the death could partly be traced to some defect or ailment in the constitution of the person bitten.

In tropical countries, however, the case is very different. In these, while the harmless snake is the exception, the bite of most others invariably proves fatal, unless some prompt steps are taken in the way of remedy. Of such steps I shall speak by-and-by. Snakes, too, are far more numerous; they may lurk in the tuft of grass at your feet. One is very probably hid in the log of wood which you place on your fire. They drop upon you from the roof of your dwelling, and climbing up the leg of your bed, coil themselves up in your blankets; and yet, in many of these countries, a snake bite is by no means a common occurrence, and the story of it creates almost the same sensation as that of a man tossed by a bull, or bitten by a mad dog in England.

The reason of this is that snakes never bite except in self-defence. It seems necessary that a snake should lose its temper before it takes to biting. I have known little boys and girls who were nearly as bad as the snake in this respect.

In Queensland, North Australia, the country of which I am going

to write, there is little doubt that, were the snakes in the habit of attacking human beings, they would very soon have the colony all to themselves. But it has been ordained otherwise, and the snakes are as cowardly in escaping from danger as they are cunning in concealing themselves, and there is nothing more certain than that men in that country must be continually placing their feet on the very spot just vacated by some deadly reptile. Supposing the snake happen to be caught napping, or from some other cause be unable to get away in time, then, and then only, is he dangerous; he perceives his danger, perhaps, and lies motionless, watching; down comes the ponderous foot, ponderous enough at least to break his back; but as the foot grazes his skin, instantly, with something of the motion of a watch-spring let loose, he launches himself sideways and upwards at his foe, generally planting his fangs in the limb about two feet from the ground. Then he glides away at his leisure, leaving his enemy, be it man, or horse, or dog, or sheep, half-stupified, and in danger of losing life itself often in a few short minutes.

There are five kinds of snakes in Queensland: carpet snakes, brown snakes, black snakes, whip snakes, and those called death adders. The carpet snakes are much the largest, and are almost harmless, the bite being nearly as bad, however, as that of a dog, but never proving fatal. They grow to the length of twelve or fourteen feet sometimes, and are large in proportion; perhaps the thickness of a man's wrist. They approach in habits more nearly than any other Australian snake to the Boa-constrictor; they feed entirely on small animals and birds, when they can catch them.

I was walking once with a gun in my hand by a large creek, having with me two children. One of these noticed and reported to me a great commotion and splashing in the water at some distance, and said that he was sure he had seen an alligator. Now I knew that there were no alligators there, but went to look; and lo and behold! a great carpet snake, writhing and twisting, and apparently drowning. I went a little way off and blew his head to pieces with a charge of duck-shot, and managed to coax the body ashore with my ramrod. He appeared very bloated in the middle, and swollen up into a great lump as big as my leg. On cutting him open, we found inside a large opossum, the size of a tom cat, which had just been swallowed. The snake must have fallen into the water

while taking his constitutional nap on the brink after dinner, and the weight of his undigested meal must have hampered him sadly.

These snakes get their name from the regular and beautiful patterns which adorn their skin, and which would do credit to any carpet manufacturer in the land.

Snakes are wonderfully tenacious of life. As an instance, I was once going out to work on a sugar plantation about six in the morning, and as we passed a certain row of cane, we killed a large carpet snake, cutting off his head. On our return just before sunset, on passing the same spot, to my astonishment, the jaws of the head were still moving, and the eyes glistening. On touching the head with an iron hoe which I had in my hand, the teeth closed upon it, and the head could be lifted from the ground, and was not easily shaken off.

I don't mean to assert that the snake was then alive. It may have been, but if not living, it was, at all events, lively. The popular notion, whether true or not I do not venture an opinion, is that a snake will not die before sunset, and the same with a man bitten by one.

I can relate another snake anecdote, which is still more remarkable. The snake in question was a brown one, whose bite, if left to itself for twenty minutes, must certainly prove fatal. I was walking up a narrow beaten track one morning, carrying two iron pails of water, one in each hand, when I noticed right in front of me what I took, carelessly, to be a crooked stick or branch blown from a tree; as I approached this, I was going to kick it out of the way. Just as my foot was within a yard of it, I saw that it was a brown snake, which began to put out its tongue and hiss at me. I had no time for thought, but I jumped clean over it, buckets and all, for I was too close to stop myself, and turning round emptied the water over it. The snake began to make off, and I looked for a stick (any little switch will break the back of a snake and render it helpless). I soon got one, and, as I thought, having killed the snake, which was an unusually large one, I carried it in triumph, doubled over the stick, intending to make a belt of its skin. As I went I began to examine its fangs, pulling its jaws open with my fingers.

The woman of the house begged me to throw it on the fire, as she was afraid that the children should touch it. No sooner had Mr. Snake felt the heat of the fire than he glided off, apparently unhurt. I had had a narrow escape. However, in order that there might be no second

mistake, I chopped him in pieces with a spade. These snakes take to the water. I have seen one swimming, with its head high, more than two miles out at sea.

Next in order comes the black snake, which is also very dangerous.

I was once sleeping alone every night in a hut, ten or twelve miles from any other habitation. As I did not intend to stay there very long, I had been content with a bed of dry grass on the ground. One night, as I conjectured, about ten o'clock, I was alarmed by feeling something pass at a great rate across the blanket in which I was rolled. Nothing more happened, and I lighted a match and looked round the hut, which was scarcely large enough "to swing a cat," as the saying is. I concluded that it must have been fancy. The same thing happened the next night, with the same result. I did not know what to make of it, and the third night I determined to sit up and watch. I waited a good while and nothing came, and I thought "I'd better change my bed to the other side of the hut, and see what that will do." Just then in glided a black snake, without apparent notice of me. He crawled over the blankets, which lay as I had left them, and entered a rat hole in the corner of the hut, which I had often noticed, wondering that I never saw any rats. Now snakes feed on rats, and where there are snakes there are nearly sure to be no rats, and *vice versa*. I went out and put on a pot of water to boil on my log fire, and returning with this, poured the contents down the hole. It was not long before the snake made his appearance, and I easily killed him.

A common incident of bush life, when camping out, is to find a black snake in the morning coiled in your blankets. The visitor on being disturbed glides quietly away, apparently much the better for his night's lodging.

I knew a lady who was just going to put her hand into the pocket of a dress, which was hanging on the wall, when a snake popped out its head. When found in such situations, they are doubtless in search of warmth. Lastly, I must say something about whip snakes and death adders. The first are so called because they resemble very much, in shape, colour, and markings, the plaited thong of a stock whip. Both these are dangerous, on account of their small size and lurking habits. The death adder, especially, is fond of going to sleep in the middle of a beaten track, and is much more easily stepped upon than

others. Fortunately, they are not very numerous. Snakes are very fond of sugar, and on the plantation to which I have alluded there were great numbers of them. When at work we used to wear worsted stockings over our boots and trousers, reaching above the knee. This entangles the fangs and absorbs the poison. Leather boots are little, if any, protection.

When bitten by a snake the only plan is either to cut out the piece affected at once, or burn it well before the poison has time to spread in the blood.


I was once living with a man who had been nicknamed "Three-fingered Jack." He was cutting wood, and a death adder came out of a log and bit him on the finger of the right hand; with great presence of mind he tried to chop off the finger with his left hand, and succeeded not only in doing this, but in cutting off two others as well. One hears many anecdotes of this kind in the colonies.

So much for my experience of snakes and their ways. Multitudes of similar stories might doubtless be told, and better told by many who have resided in hot countries, and kept their eyes open and their wits about them.

GEORGE CARRINGTON.

OLD-FASHIONED FAIRY TALES.

MURDOCH'S RATH.*

AT was as nice a boy as old Ireland holds; and clever at his trade he'd have been, if only he'd learned one. But he'd never had any parents to speak of, and they taught him nothing, so when he was come to years of discretion he earned his living by running errands for his neighbours. On market days he used to tramp to the town with commissions from country folk who couldn't spare time to go; and Pat could always be trusted to make the best of a bargain, and bring back all the change, for he was the soul of honesty and kindness.

It's no wonder then that he was beloved by every one, and got as much work as he could do, and if the pay had but fitted the work he'd

* *Rath*—a kind of moat; "a small circular meadow surrounded by a mound overgrown with furze bushes." Rathes are favourite spots with Irish fairies.

have been comfortable too. But as it was, what he got wouldn't have kept him in shoe-leather, but for his making both ends meet by wearing his shoes in his pocket, except when he was in the town, and obliged to look genteel for the credit of the place he came from.

Now Pat was as sober a boy as you'll meet with anywhere in the world, from Ballyhillin to Kenmare; but the best of us may be overtaken, and Pat bethought him afterwards of a cup of tea that some one had given him, that had a taste through it that was neither sugar nor cream. This was on a market day that I am going to speak of, and when he started home in the evening, with his parcels all correct as usual, he never bethought him to take off his brogues, but tramped on as if shoe-leather were just made to be knocked to bits on the king's highway.

Well, everybody knows there are two ways home from the town; and that's not meaning the right way and the wrong way, which my grandmother (rest her soul!) said there was to every place but one that it's not genteel to name. There could only be a wrong way *there*, she said. The two ways home from the town were the highway, and the way by Murdoch's Rath.

Now Murdoch's Rath was a pleasant enough spot in the daytime, but not many persons cared to go by it when the sun was down. And in all the years Pat had been going backwards and forwards to the town, he had never come home except by the high road. But on this particular evening, when he came to the place where the two roads part, he got, as one may say, into a sort of confusion. And this was how it was. He knew, as well as any one, that he was a bit overtaken, and that it behoved him to take uncommon care, both of himself and what he carried; so says he to himself, "Halt!" says he (for his own uncle had been a soldier, and Pat knew the word of command). "The left turn is the right one," said he; "and what I'm maning is, that the right turn is to the left." And he was going down the high road as straight as he could go (which was pretty steadily considering the ruts) when suddenly he bethought himself, "And what am I doing?" says he; "Mother Martin's strong tea is to be the ruin of me, that's clear. This was my left hand going to town, and how in the name of good luck could it be my left going back, considering that I've turned round? It's well that I looked into it in time," says he. And he went off as fast down the other road as he had started down that.

Well, the road was only a lane, and a rough and narrow one, and Pat got along but badly. But he was a good-humoured soul, and when he tumbled first against one hedge and then against the other, all that he said was, "There isn't far to fall." And when he caught his shoe on a stone, and fell with his face in the gripe of the ditch, he said, "I assure your honour it's my head's to blame, though it looks to be my feet," for Pat knew his own meaning at the worst of times, and had as much reason in him as any man in Ireland.

Now, as good luck would have it, there had been some rain lately, and Pat's face was in the water, and this was how he came out of it as sober as if Mother Martin's tea had never passed his lips. And after that he got on bravely, though he could not bethink himself which part of the road he was in; and all of a sudden the moon shone out as bright as day, and Pat found himself in Murdoch's Rath.

But that was the smallest part of the wonder; for the Rath was full of fairies.

When Pat got in they were dancing round and round till Pat's feet tingled to look at them, for he was a good dancer himself. And as he sat down on the side of the Rath, and snapped his fingers to mark the time, the dancing stopped, and a little man in a black hat and a green coat, with white stockings, and red shoes on his feet, comes up to Pat.

"Won't your honour take a turn with us?" says he, bowing till he nearly touched the ground. And, indeed, he had not far to go, for he was barely two feet high.

"Don't say it twice, sir," says Pat. "It's myself will be proud to have a twirl wid ye;" and before you could look round, there was Pat in the circle dancing away for the dear life. At first his feet felt like feathers for lightness, and it seemed as if he could have gone on for ever. At last, however, he grew tired, and would have liked to stop, but the fairies would not, and so they danced on and on. Pat tried to think of something *good* to say, that he might free himself from the spell, but all he could think of was:

"A dozen hanks of grey yarn for Mistress Murphy."

"Three gross of bright buttons for the tailor."

"Half an ounce of throat drops for Father Andrew, and an ounce of black pepper for his housekeeper."

For these were what he had gone to town to fetch, and he ran over

them in his mind as he came along, to be sure they were all right; and he could think of nothing else. And it seemed to Pat that the moon was on the one side of the Rath when they began to dance, and on the other when they left off; but he could not be sure after all that going round. One thing was plain enough. He had danced every bit of leather off the soles of his feet, and they were blistered so that he could hardly stand; but all the little folk did was to stand and hold their sides with laughing at him.

At last the one who had spoken to him before stepped up and said, "Don't break your heart about it, Pat," says he; "I'll lend you my own shoes till the morning, for you seem to be a good-natured sort of a boy."

Well, Pat looked at the fairy's shoes, that were the size of a baby's, and he looked at his own feet; but not wishing to be uncivil, he says, "It's kindly obliged that I am to you, sir," says he. "And if your honour'd be good enough to put them on for me, maybe you wouldn't spoil the shape." For he thought to himself, "Small blame to me if the little gentleman can't get them to fit."

With which he sat down on the side of the Rath, and the fairy fitted on the shoes for him. But no sooner did they touch Pat's feet, than they became altogether a convenient size, and fitted him like wax. And more than this, when he stood up, he didn't feel his blisters at all, at all.

"Bring 'em back to the Rath at sunrise, Pat, my boy," says the little man.

And as Pat was climbing over the ditch, "Look round, Pat," says he. And when Pat looked round, there were jewels and pearls lying at the roots of the furze-bushes on the ditch, as thick as peas.

"Will you help yourself, or take what's given ye, Pat?" says the fairy man.

"Sure, I've learned manners," says Pat. "Would you have me help myself before company? I'll take what your honour pleases to give me, and be thankful."

The fairy man picked a lot of yellow furze-blossoms from the bushes, and filled Pat's pockets.

"Keep 'em for love, Pat, dear," says he.

Pat would have liked some of the jewels, but he put the blossoms by for love.

"Good-evening to your honour," says he.

"And where are you going, Pat, my boy?" says the fairy man.

"I'm going home," says Pat. And if the fairy man didn't know where that was, small blame to him.

"Just let me dust them shoes for ye, Pat," says the fairy man. And as Pat lifted up each foot he breathed on it, and dusted it with the tail of his green coat. "Home!" says he, and when he let go, Pat was at his own doorstep before he could look round, and his parcels safe and sound with him.

Next morning he was up with the sun, and carried the fairy man's shoes back to the Rath. As he came up, the little man looked over the ditch.

"Good-morning to your honour," says Pat; "here's your shoes."

"You're an honest boy, Pat," says the little gentleman. "It's inconvenienced I am without them, for I have but the one pair. Have you looked at them flowers this morning, Pat, dear?" he says.

"No, I've not, sir," says Pat; "I'd be loth to deceive you. I came off as soon as I was up."

"Be sure to look when you get back, Pat," says the fairy man, "and good luck to you."

With which he disappeared, and Pat went home. He looked for the furze-blossoms, as the fairy man had told him, and bad luck to him if they weren't all pure gold pieces.

Well, now Pat was so rich, he went to the shoemaker to order another pair of brogues, and being a kindly, gossiping boy, the shoemaker soon learned the whole story of the fairy man and the Rath. And this so stirred up the shoemaker's greed, that he resolved to go the very next night himself, to see if he could not dance with the fairies, and have like luck.

He found his way to the Rath all correct, and sure enough the fairies were dancing, and asked him to join. He danced the soles off his feet, as Pat had done, and the fairy man lent him his shoes, and sent him home in a twinkling. As he was going over the ditch, he looked round, and saw the roots of the furze-bushes glowing with precious stones as if they had been glow-worms.

"Will you help yourself, or take what's given ye?" said the fairy man.

"I'll help myself," said the cobbler, for he thought—"If I can't get more than Pat brought home, my fingers are stiffer than I thought."

So he drove his hand into the bushes, and if he didn't get plenty, it wasn't for want of grasping.

When he got up in the morning, he went straight to the jewels. But nothing was to be seen but broken bits of mud. "I ought not to have looked till I'd been to the Rath," said he. "It's best to do all in due order."

But he had made up his mind not to return the fairy man's shoes.

"Who knows what power lies in them?" said he. So he made a small pair of red leather shoes, as like them as could be, and he blacked the others upon his feet, so that the fairies might not know them, and at sunrise he went to the Rath.

The fairy man was looking over the ditch, as before.

"Good-morning to you," said he.

"The top of the morning to you, sir," said the cobbler; "here's your shoes." And he handed him the pair that he had made, with a face as grave as a judge.

The fairy man looked at them, but he said nothing, though he did not put them on.

"Have you looked at the things you got last night?" says he.

"I'll not deceive you, sir," says the cobbler. "I came off as soon as I was up. I've not cast an eye upon them."

"Be sure to look when you get back," says the fairy man. And just as the cobbler was getting over the ditch to go home, he says,

"If my eyes don't deceive me," says he, "there's the least taste in life of dirt on your left shoe. Let me dust it with the tail of my coat."

"That means home in a twinkling," thought the cobbler, and he held up his foot.

The fairy man dusted it, and muttered something that the cobbler did not hear. Then, "Sure," says he, "it's them dirty pastures that you've come through. But the other shoe's as bad."

So the cobbler held up his right foot, and the fairy man rubbed that with the tail of his green coat. When it was done, the cobbler's feet seemed to tingle, and then to itch, and then to smart, and then to burn. And at last he began to dance, and he danced all round the Rath (the fairy man laughing and holding his sides), and then round and round again. And he danced till he cried out with weariness, and tried to shake the shoes off. But they stuck fast, and the fairies

drove him over the ditch, and through the prickly furze-bushes, and he danced away.

Where he danced to, I cannot tell you. Whether he ever got rid of the fairy shoes, I do not know. The jewels never were more than




bits of mud, and they were swept out when his cabin was cleaned, which was not very soon, you may be sure.

All this is long ago; but there are those who will say that the covetous cobbler dances still, between sunset and sunrise, round Murdoch's Rath.

LITTLE ALVILDE.

A TRUE STORY.

Translated from the Norse of A. Hansen.

T was a bright summer morning, the birds were singing, the young lambs frisking about, the bees and the butterflies hovering over the fresh meadow-flowers, when a party of merry children set off to spend a long holiday in the woods, each of them carrying a little basket and a tiny pitcher. Fritz, the eldest boy, walked first; he was followed by Wenche, Thora, Olaf, and merry, noisy Auton; last of all came the dear elder sister Erna, holding little Alvide's hand.

She was just four years old, and as she danced along in her white frock, blue sash, and rose-coloured shoes, she looked, as she was, the sweetest darling, and her chattering tongue moved just as fast as her pattering little feet.

"I'll find so many, oh, so many, many blueberries; and I'll gather so many flowers, and I'll make so many wreaths: one for you, Erna, and one for Fritz, and one for Wenche, and one for Thora, and one for Olaf; but none for Auton, he would only tear it in pieces! oh, yes, poor Auton shall have a tiny wreath. And I'm going to make two wreaths for mamma, because she had to stay at home with little Inga; Inga is too little to wear a wreath; and, oh! Erna, I shall make a big wreath for papa, he has such a great large head."

At last they reached the wood, and Fritz made them all sit down on the grass round a large moss-grown stone. Erna opened the baskets and took out fresh buns and delicious cakes for their luncheon. If a cake was a little smaller than the others she kept it for herself; if she found a particularly large one it was given to little Alvide. Fritz had a wicker-cased bottle of milk slung at his back by a cord, and from this he poured for each into a small tin cup.

"May I blow my trumpet now?" asked Auton, impatiently, when the feast was ended, and as Fritz nodded he blew with such vigour that all the little sparrows flew out of the bushes in a terrible fright. This was the signal for the berry-picking to commence.

"Oh, do come here," cried one, "the bushes are blue with berries!"

"No, here—there's thousands here; and I have found strawberries, such splendid fellows! do look here," cried another.

"I'll stay with Erna," said little Alvilde; "but not the whole time, Erna; afterwards I must go to Thora; and after that to Wenche."

"Let us put the large tine* under this tree and empty our baskets into it as we fill them."

So the berry-picking began; the busy hands did not soon grow weary, neither did the chattering tongues; the sun rose high in the sky, and the shadows grew shorter, but a soft breeze cooled their hot cheeks.

When the baskets were filled the four little girls seated themselves in a circle; Erna took a ball of string from her bag, and they began to weave garlands of heather, wild roses, pansies, forget-me-not, and blue speedwell. The woods in Norway are brilliant with flowers of every hue during the short hot summer, flowers larger and brighter than are to be found growing wild in England. Little Alvilde soon grew tired and lay down on the soft grass with her curly head on Erna's knee, and asked her sister to sing her to sleep. The other little girls ran after their brothers, guided by the sound of Auton's tin trumpet, which they heard far up the hill. Erna rose, too, when she saw the little one's eyes were fast closed; she thought she would go in search of flowers with which to weave a garland prettier than any of the others, and this garland she would place on the little golden head she loved so dearly while her darling was still asleep. She had not gone far before she came to a brook whose banks were bright with flowers of every possible colour; she began eagerly to gather the freshest and loveliest, insensibly going higher up the stream and farther from her little sister.

It is very pleasant, dear children, to play in the beautiful green summer woods, but in Norway it is not always quite safe; in the deep dark fir-woods bears are often found—fierce woolly bears such as you have all seen in your picture-books. They are very fond of berries and wild fruits, but they eat sheep, cows, and horses when they can find them, and human beings, too, very often. Had the children known that a great brown bear lived in this wood they would never have ventured into it, but this they did not know.

Little Alvilde was awakened by hearing a deep hoarse growl very

* Tine, a kind of wooden basket, painted in gay colours, used by the Norwegians.

near her ; she jumped up and called the other children, but they were now far away and could not hear her. She felt a little frightened, but yet she did not cry. "They will soon come back," she thought, and taking her basket she began to eat her berries.

Hark! what is that crashing through the bushes? Nearer and nearer came the sound, and in another minute two great eyes shone through the underwood, and then an enormous shaggy bear came slowly out and went growling towards the little girl. She tried to cry, but the tears stood in her blue eyes without overflowing, and her little heart beat so fast with terror that for a moment she could not utter a sound; at last she said:

"Oh! don't hurt me, bear! please don't hurt me! I am a good girl—look, I am not crying. I know you because you are in my picture-book. Please don't bite me and I will give you all my berries—here!" and she held out her little basket. The bear looked at her, put its great paw into the basket, and all the berries rolled out on the grass. It licked them up in an instant, and began again to sniff about Alvilde's clothes.

"Dear, kind bear, you must not hurt me—indeed, indeed I am good—here is another basket of blueberries for you!" The bear knocked down the basket and began to eat the sweet fruit. Alvilde no longer felt afraid, but made haste to offer it some more, but it caught sight of the large tine under the tree, which was quite full of strawberries; it buried its nose in it, and began to eat with great delight.

"No, no, bear," cried Alvilde, "now you are naughty; you must not take all the berries; they are not mine, I cannot give them to you; besides, if you eat so many you will be quite ill."

She put her hands boldly on the bear's shaggy neck, and tried to push him away, but in vain.

"Very well, just wait till Fritz comes back; he will be so angry, and will hurt you with his stick." The bear just looked up, and then quietly went on eating.

"Now I will make you pretty," she said. She hung one of her wreaths round its neck and placed another smaller one on its head. She was looking at it with delight when she heard the sound of Auton's trumpet, and soon afterwards the children came singing down the hill. The bear turned and went slowly back into the dark forest.

When her brothers and sisters reached her she told them what had happened, and tried to excuse herself for not having taken better care of the fruit. You can guess how frightened they were. Erna clasped her little sister in her arms and began to cry, but Fritz hurried them away, and they ran out of the wood, leaving wreaths and flowers and baskets behind in their terror.

How the mother wept with joy and fright as she caught her little child in her arms as the children told the story, clasping her tightly to her bosom as though the great bear were still near! Her husband put his arms round them both, and kissed his little girl many times, then went slowly into his study without saying a word. What do you think he did when he was alone there?

Late in the autumn the big brown bear was shot, and round his neck still hung little Alvilde's wreath.

THE GREAT PYRAMID.



THOSE of our young readers who have taken an interest in the Egyptian sketches may perhaps remember that "Aunt Emma" had promised to give "Charlie" some account of an excursion to the Pyramids.

No very long time was suffered to pass before she was reminded of her promise, poor little Charlie being as fond of stories as most boys and girls, and having an additional claim to them from being tied to his couch all the long summer days, when he would so have liked to be out in the woods and fields. Aunt Emma therefore settled herself beside him with her work, and began:

"Our Nile voyage had just ended; it was in the beginning of December; we had arrived at Cairo the day before, and been gladdened by receiving a great packet of letters from home, and you must fancy us riding to old Cairo and being transported, donkeys and all, across the river in a good-sized boat, which we had no sooner entered than three or four poor Arabs sprang in after us and crouched down in the boat. They were too poor perhaps to pay for a passage, and I need not say that we did not suffer them to be turned out.

"In a few minutes we had reached the opposite, or Libyan side of

the Nile, had mounted our good little steeds, and were trotting through the town of Ghizeh, which is very picturesque.

"Many of the houses have delightful old Saracenic arches, and over the doorways there are often to be seen bright paintings; and the walls are frequently red and white, though of course the greater number of dwellings are merely built of mud.

"The bazaars are really quite creditable, and as this was a fair day, a good deal seemed to be doing; there were camels, horses and donkeys for sale outside the town, and a whole host of household goods besides.

"The people had taken to their winter garments; most of the merchants wore cloaks of dark cloth, lined generally with some bright colour and trimmed with fur; poorer people had dresses of coarse brown and white stuff.

"A broad road with tamarisk trees and different kinds of acacia on each side of it leads out of the town, and we then came to fields, which when we went up the Nile had been all covered by its waters, but, now that the inundation had almost subsided, bore crops of millet, beans, vetches, and other plants, all looking delightfully green and fresh in the early morning.

"We next passed through groves of particularly erect and tall palms, and here we were met by a number of Arabs, who informed us that they were the Arabs of the Pyramids, and wished us to engage them as guides.

"They had picked up a little English, as they are in the constant habit of accompanying travellers; and it was droll to hear them recommending themselves: 'Arab ver' strong man;' 'Arab berry good;' 'Ingleez berry good,' and so on.

"By-and-by we came to a large sheet of water, and were brought to a standstill; it was evidently too deep for the donkeys, and what were we to do? The Arabs were in no doubt on the subject, but catching us up as if we were babies, proceeded to wade across, the water being above their waists.

"Fancy your Aunt Emma seated on the shoulder of a fine tall Arab and borne along in triumph, and the gentlemen of the party just as helpless, and even the dragoman, who did not wish to wet his clothes, carried too!

"One stout lady was very much afraid, and strongly objected to the

proceeding; she declared she would not submit to it, and wanted to turn back; but this of course no one would listen to, so she finally was persuaded to resign herself to the care of two of the strongest looking men, who seemed immensely amused at her timidity, and once or twice amused themselves by pretending to let her fall, and then laughing and showing their white teeth, would say 'la, la' (no, no), 'no fear,' and march on again. I am sure she was heartily glad when she regained *terra firma*.

"But as we had left the donkeys behind when we came to the water, we had now a long way to walk over the sandy plain, the place where Napoleon fought his great battle of the Pyramids; I believe we walked fully three miles, and all the while the Pyramids were in sight; but not until we came close to them did we form any idea of their immense size. Then indeed we felt like pigmies.

"I must try to give you some idea of these wonderful buildings, of which only six now remain, three large and three small ones, though it is said that sixty-five once existed in a straight line: the largest is called the Pyramid of Cheops, and was built by that king.

"The second was built by his brother Cephren, and the third by Mycerinus, the son of Cheops.

"If you can fancy a solid cone much higher than St. Paul's Cathedral, all composed of steps the whole way up, and with the pointed top knocked off so as to have a large square platform at the summit, and can imagine the steps to be formed of immense stones, some of them thirty feet long, and none of them less than two feet high, while many measure three feet and even more, you will know what the Great Pyramid is like.

"We had each of us two Arabs to help us up, for it is such hard work to climb more than two hundred of these high steps that we never could have done it alone, and the Arabs kept making us run a race, each trying to get their lady or gentleman first to the top, and it was impossible to make them comprehend that we should have preferred to go more slowly. At difficult spots a third man would come and push us, while the two already in possession dragged us by the arms till we thought they would come out of their sockets. At last we did reach the top, and were glad to spread out a burnous and lie down upon it to rest.

"It took us twenty minutes to ascend. When we had taken breath,

and were able to look about us, we had a splendid view of the Nile valley, with Cairo and the Mohkattam hills in the distance, and another group of Pyramids at Dashoor and Sakkara nearer at hand, with groves of acacia around them.

"Close to us were the second Pyramid, which looked quite small from the height we were at, and that of Mycerinus, which is very much smaller again. But there is a remarkable point about the second Pyramid; the upper part of it is quite smooth, and shows how all of them were originally built: the steps which we climbed are made by the smooth outer stones which once faced the building having been taken away. Do you not remember, when you used long ago to play with bricks, you had some for building bridges and houses, and some for a pyramid, and when you had shaped it out with blocks and piled one on another like stairs, you used three-cornered ones for filling up between, so that you had a smooth surface in the end? Just so the real pyramid was built; the huge blocks were put one upon another and cemented strongly together; so strongly that not only have they stood thousands of years, but it took immense labour to remove any of them so as to gain an entrance to the inside.

"The outer three-cornered pieces, however, were so nicely polished that the Arabs took them to build mosques in Cairo, preferring the labour of removing them to that of hewing and preparing others. On the second Pyramid a good many of these three-cornered stones remain as originally fixed, and this makes it much more difficult to ascend. The Arabs, however, delight to show their agility by scrambling to the top in five minutes, provided always that they are rewarded by a good bucksheesh. Thirty Arabs, with a sheikh, live at the Pyramids, and in the winter season reap a good harvest from travellers.

"When we had looked about us for some time, we began to descend, which is easily done by jumping from stone to stone: we thought nothing of it at the time, but afterwards, oh, how our legs did ache! For a week we could not go up and down stairs without pain, our muscles had been so strained by the unusual exertion."

"Something like climbing a mountain, Auntie," said Charlie, who remembered an excursion to Helvellyn as a great event in his life.

"Yes, but worse, for the steps are so high that the effort is continual and very great; however, the sight is worth twenty times the trouble.

"When we had nearly reached the bottom, we espied a capital

repast laid out on the lowest steps: had it been Arab fare, leeks and bread, I believe we should have been thankful for it; as it was we did full justice to what we found there, and did not even grumble although the champagne had 'come to grief' on the way, when one of the donkeys fell down.

"It is said that one hundred thousand workmen were employed for ten years in cutting and transporting the stone from the quarries, and making a causeway by which to carry it, and twenty years more to building the Pyramid itself; and Herodotus informs us that the cost of the radishes, onions, and garlic alone, consumed by the workmen, amounted to 200,000*l.*: 'how much more then,' says he, 'must have been consumed upon their other food, their tools, and clothing?'

"The stone of which the Pyramids are built is full of fossils, and we picked up many; in particular, a very beautiful and perfect echinus or sea-urchin, and hundreds of tiny oyster shells; in the sand we also found many fresh-water shells. The Arabs call the oysters the Sphinxes' money. A very large Sphinx, like those we saw at Karnak but six times the size, stands in the plain; the Arabs call it Abool-hol, 'the father of terror,' only the head and shoulders can now be seen above the sand, which drifts round it and constantly threatens to cover it up, though it is cleared away from time to time."

"You have said nothing, Auntie, of the inside of the Pyramid; did you not go in?"

"Yes, we did, and were half suffocated by the heat and dust. You enter by a narrow passage a little way up the side, and the descent is pretty steep; passing through another narrow passage you come to a large chamber formed of enormous blocks of granite, and in it is the granite coffin of the king, which has, however, been opened and plundered, and much broken; there are also other chambers, but they are very difficult to get at, and we were too faint and weary to attempt more than our walk back again over the plain.

"Again were we carried across the broad sheet of water, and glad were we to remount our donkeys and canter away towards Cairo: our running footmen, the sailors from our dahabieh, who I forgot to mention had accompanied us, were very merry, cracking jokes all the way, and calling out to us 'Beschweiyah' (take care), and 'warda warda' (look out), as there were plenty of holes and bad bits along the avenue, and it was getting dark as we returned. However,

we reached the hotel quite safely and much pleased with our day."

"Thank you, Aunt Emma; did you stay long in Cairo this time, or did you start soon for Syria?"

"We remained about a fortnight, we had still a great deal more to see; we wanted to visit the different mosques and ancient buildings, and besides, we had many preparations to make for our onward journey."

"What preparations?"

"Why, first we had to buy tents, and when they were ready they were pitched in the square in front of the hotel, that we might examine them and see if they were all right. There were three; two for our own party and one for the servants; they were circular and made of waterproof cloth lined with blue and yellow striped calico; each tent was large enough to hold two little iron camp bedsteads, a folding table, and two or three camp stools. The pole in the centre, which supported the tent, was most useful to hang things upon, as we used to fix gimlets into it for pegs. Pieces of matting were laid upon the ground, and a small bright coloured Persian carpet was placed beside each bed."

"How snug and nice that sounds! What else had you to get?"

"Oh, provisions! Remember, we were to be a whole month in the desert, so we bought two sheep (we knew that we could get more from the Bedouin Arabs, otherwise we must have had a larger number), eighty fowls, a dozen pigeons, and fourteen turkeys; four hundred loaves, three hundred pounds of biscuits, six hundred eggs, five hundred candles, three hundred pounds of rice and maccaroni, eighteen cheeses, besides hams, tongues, potatoes, flour, tea, sugar, salt, chocolate, coffee, preserves, charcoal for cooking, and I cannot tell you what besides, and four large barrels of water, as we should often encamp in places where we should find none."

"Why, Auntie, you must have had quite a shop with you! How many camels were required to carry it all?"

"Twenty-four altogether, including our own and those of our servants; but I must stop talking now, Charlie, and if you want to know about our desert life I will describe it to you on some future occasion."

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER II.



UT Harry's hopes were doomed to be again disappointed, and Friday brought only more rain.

Yesterday had been dull enough, but to-day was ten times duller. The children wandered listlessly about the house, grumbling at everything and everybody, till at last, in their despair, they made up their minds to make another batch of toffee. But everything went wrong: first there was too much butter, and Harry said it was Maud's fault; then there was too much sugar, and this time Harry was to blame; then the saucepan upset, and this was certainly Jack's doing, for he had persisted, in spite of repeated cautions from Maud, in stirring the mixture with an energy that Harry likened to a house on fire; and finally, just as they were congratulating themselves on having triumphantly overcome all difficulties, and Maud was daintily buttering a dish into which to pour the toffee, of which Harry, after thrusting his head almost into the saucepan to inspect it, was giving a very satisfactory account, the toffee caught fire—nobody could discover how or why—and, in a moment, the room was full of smoke, and of a very disagreeable smell, which, in spite of the windows being instantly thrown wide open, quickly spread along the passages, and penetrated even to their mother's room. Mrs. Vernon rang her bell, to inquire if there was a chimney on fire; and, on learning what the real mischief was, sent a message to the children, to the effect that she was much annoyed that they could not find some more rational way of amusing themselves, and that, at any rate, they must make no more toffee for the future, as she really could not have the whole house poisoned in this way. But no fresh amusement, rational or irrational, would suggest itself to their minds this afternoon. They were fairly at the end of their resources. Nothing remained but the luxury of grumbling, and even of that they were almost tired.

And so it came about, through a cruel conspiracy of circumstances—the persistent rain, the unmanageableness of the schoolroom-fire, and Fanny Arnott's most inopportune freedom from engagements—that, on

the third day of the holidays, Harry, Maud, and Jack were standing disconsolately at the schoolroom window, half inclined to think that holidays were a mistake, and that it behoved some one at once to invent a substitute for them. Mabel, whose nine dolls had simultaneously fallen ill with measles, had not time to suffer, like the others, from *ennui*. With a tiny white apron tied over a black frock of Maud's, which she wore in preference to her own, because it swept the floor, and gave her a more matronly appearance, and with her pretty golden curls tucked away under a quakerish white muslin cap, she bustled about, preparing medicines and mustard-plasters for the invalids, and summoning doctors (Harry and Jack), who, however, always professed to be too busy to attend her patients. It was delightful to watch her; the important air, the look as if all the cares of the world were upon her shoulders, contrasted so quaintly with her dimpled face and childish figure. Maud, who still treasured a favourite doll of her own young days in the recesses of a private cupboard, was more than half disposed to join in her younger sister's busy play; but she lacked courage to face the contempt such childishness would have met with at the hands of those superior beings her brothers, and she chose therefore to share their dignified dulness: so she stood in the window playing with the tassel of the blind, and wondering for the hundredth time what Aunt Fanny would be like.

The much-talked-of arrival was now alarmingly imminent. Six o'clock had struck, and in less than half an hour Aunt Fanny would be among them. For one thing they were all thankful; as the rain continued they were spared the ordeal of meeting her at the station. The schoolroom-maid came to the door: "If you please, Miss Maud, your mamma wishes to speak to you." The summons was welcome.

Mrs. Vernon had some final instructions to give about the reception of her sister; Maud was to go and see that her aunt's room was comfortable, and to be sure to be in the hall to meet her when the carriage drove up. Mrs. Vernon herself had a pain in the back, which prevented her from leaving the sofa. Maud was not at all sorry to have something to do, for in truth she was beginning to feel quite nervous at the prospect of seeing her aunt; and, indeed, if Fanny Arnott was at all like what her nephews and nieces had pictured her, she would be a formidable person to encounter. Harry, on the strength of the bad temper with which his imagination had endowed her, and the

pedantry of which those lectures on "something horrid" had convicted her, had facetiously nicknamed her the Blue Dragon, and had announced his intention of calling her so to her face if she attempted to "come it over him with any of her airs and graces;" but Maud was not so sure of her own courage, and she was therefore glad to divert her thoughts from the approaching meeting by making the best bedroom look far too cheerful and pleasant for the reception of so odious a guest. She poked the fire into a glorious blaze, rearranged the chairs and tables, according to her ideas of comfort, and even ran down to the conservatory for a few ferns and flowers with which to fill the vases on the mantel-shelf.

Almost before her preparations were finished she caught the sound of carriage-wheels; she ran down; the servants were already opening the door; a gust of wind and rain swept into the hall; there was the momentary bustle that always attends an arrival, the search for umbrellas, the hurrying forward to secure small parcels; then a pleasant voice said, "Thanks; I think that is all," and in another moment Aunt Fanny and Maud were standing face to face.

"How do you do, dear? you are Maud, I suppose?" and the Dragon, instead of striking her with iron talons, as is, I believe, the manner of dragons, took both her hands into her own, and kissed her in a kindly, human fashion. Maud surrendered on the spot, and felt so heartily ashamed of the foolish fancies she had been harbouring that it was fully half a minute before she could collect her wits to return her aunt's greetings, and hope she had had a pleasant journey. But, as the Dragon did not try to reassure her by wondering whether she had lost her tongue, in another half minute she was quite happy again: and before they got to the top of the staircase she could almost have told her aunt with what sort of expectation she had come down to meet her, but there was no time for confidences, for Aunt Fanny had many questions to ask, and answers to listen to, and here they were at Mrs. Vernon's door; and, perhaps, after all, it would not have been quite gracious.

Mrs. Vernon was impatiently awaiting her sister. The "come in" that answered Maud's knock sounded quite eager, and the smile that welcomed Fanny was a real smile, Maud thought, not the mere ghost of past smiles that she was used to see on her mother's face. Maud could not help lingering at the door to watch the happy meeting;

then remembering that her mother and aunt must have much to say which could only be said to one another, she shut the door behind her, and ran back to the schoolroom to report on the Blue Dragon.

She was greeted with a volley of questions.

All together. "Well, what is she like?"

Harry. "Does she squint?"

Jack. "Is she awfully fine?"

Mabel. "Is her face *very* dark blue?"

Jack, again. "Did you call her *Aunt Fanny*?"

And a score of other questions, following so fast one upon the other, that to understand them was difficult, and to answer them impossible. Was she short?—was she tall?—dark?—fair?—pretty?—ugly? Maud found herself answering yes and no at random, and contradicting herself dreadfully.

"Come, now, Maud, that's rather strong," expostulated Harry; "you're making her out to be tall and short, pretty and ugly."

"Well, it is your own fault. If you would only hold your tongues for a few minutes I might be able to tell you something about her; but if you all ask questions at once, and don't wait for the answers, it is impossible to give you sensible ones, and, indeed, I don't think it is worth while." I am afraid Maud was getting cross.

"Miss Vernon is right," cried Harry; "she has something of importance to communicate, and it is impossible that she should do justice to her subject unless the meeting gives her a patient hearing. Ladies and gentlemen, you are requested to be perfectly silent for the space of five minutes, or, if you find that impossible, it is hoped that at least, or I should say, at most, only one of you will speak at a time. Miss Vernon, we hang upon your lips."

"How can you be so absurd, Harry? If you make me laugh like this, it will be more hopeless than ever."

"Miss Vernon," continued Harry, "is unaccustomed to public speaking, and her feelings are too much for her; she is not able to make a speech, but if any lady or gentleman will put a civil question to her, she will try to give a civil answer. Ladies and gentlemen, I will set a good example by asking Miss Vernon if Miss Frances Arnott, commonly called the Blue Dragon, is more than six foot high?"

"Certainly not," replied Maud, who had quite recovered her good temper.

"Is she five foot four?"

"I can't say."

"Is she dark?"

"I really don't know."

"Is she fair?"

"I don't think so."

"Has she got a pretty nose?"

"Oh Harry! you are really too silly. It was dark when Aunt Fanny came in, and, as she had on a large cloak and a hat and veil, it was very difficult to see what she was like; but, do you know, I expect she's very nice, because——" Maud came to a standstill; she really could not say why she thought her nice. She had, as she said, had a very imperfect view of her aunt, and it was difficult to fix upon any one thing that she had said or done during the few minutes they were together which could justify her sudden change of opinion. My own belief is that it was Fanny Arnott's voice that had had the magical effect, for I well remember, the first time I met her, thinking that hers was altogether the pleasantest voice I had ever heard; it was so clear and full, and had a soft cooing sound with it that was irresistibly charming. But Maud could only repeat with growing confidence that she was sure she was very nice.

"But how is she nice? What sort of niceness is it?"

It was clearly necessary to say something definite. It suddenly flashed upon Maud that she had seen her aunt put up an eyeglass to look at the clock. Now, that a lady uses eye-glasses does not certainly tell us much about her character; but at any rate here was a fact, something to begin with, so she said:

"I think she is shortsighted, for I saw that she had eye-glasses."

"Eye-glasses! Oh, goodness me!" said Jack. "Fancy a young lady who wears eye-glasses!"

And Harry gave it as his opinion that women who used eye-glasses were quite unbearable. "He knew what she was like now; all shortsighted people were exactly alike: they went poking and peering about, meddling with everybody's business; pretending not to see anything that other people saw, and seeing everything that was not to be seen. Oh! he knew;" and to show them that he knew, he stuck a penny in his eye, and gave them a representation of a shortsighted lady paying a morning visit. Maud laughed at the performance, and said it was

as much like Aunt Fanny as—she hesitated for a simile, and Harry suggested, “As your drawing is like the Clytie;” and, delighted with himself for having so skilfully turned the tables upon his sister, he launched out afresh against shortsighted women.

“I tell you what it is,” he ended by saying; “all women with spectacles are odious. Aunt Fanny wears spectacles; therefore she is odious. That’s logic.”

“Certainly, certainly, most unanswerable logic,” said a stiff odd voice from the door. The children started round and saw Aunt Fanny herself surveying them critically through a pair of gold eye-glasses. “And so these are the children,” she continued, in the same strange voice, “and very nice children they seem; very proficient in logic, too, if I may judge by the interesting conversation that I seem to be interrupting. By-the-way, I should like to know by what process of reasoning Professor Vernon has discovered that all women who wear spectacles are odious. It is a question in which I am particularly, I may say, personally interested.” And then she broke into a merry laugh, dropped the eye-glasses, and, calling them all by their names, kissed them affectionately all round. While she had been speaking, there was not one of the children, not even Maud, with her advantage of former acquaintance, who was not at first a little puzzled to know how far she was serious; but before she had finished they were all satisfied that she was not a bit cross, and that she was not only the funniest, but, in spite of the eye-glasses, the prettiest, person they had ever seen.

There was certainly some excuse for Maud’s difficulty in giving a clear account of her aunt’s personal appearance, for one could not exactly say of Fanny Arnott that she was either tall or short, fat or thin, dark or fair; and now that it is my turn to try to describe her, I hope you will be more indulgent to me than Harry and Jack were to Maud. She was one of those people of whom it is commonly said that they are neither one thing nor the other; though I think in her case it would be better to say that she was just the right thing; and that whoever was either taller, shorter, darker, fairer, fatter or thinner than Fanny Arnott, was too tall, too short, too dark, too fair, too fat, or too thin, as the case might be. She wore a very long gown of some soft grey stuff, and her hair, the colour of which I cannot better define than by saying that it was too bright to be brown, too

dull to be golden, and not dark enough to be auburn, came down over her forehead in rippling waves, and was gathered up in soft coils at the back of her head; while from behind the eye-glasses looked out a pair of pleasant grey-blue eyes that seemed made on purpose to



laugh and love, and smile and weep, better than all other eyes in the world. In five minutes the children were at home with her; in ten they were telling her what kind of person they had expected her to be, and she was assuring them that they had formed a very just estimate

of her character, and that though for the moment she was trying to make herself agreeable, they would find out very soon that they had only been too right, and she would prove a regular——”

“Blue Dragon,” put in Jack, with a malicious glance at Harry. Aunt Fanny looked up for enlightenment, and Mabel came to the rescue.

“Harry said he should call you the Blue Dragon, because you were blue and cross; but I don’t think you’re cross, and I’m sure your *face* isn’t a bit blue.”

Then they all laughed again; Aunt Fanny more heartily than any one; and an attempt was made to explain to the little one that ladies may wear blue stockings without spoiling their complexions.

“But are you blue, Aunt Fanny? Do you know Latin and Greek, and all those things?” asked Harry, to whom this was a question of great importance.

“I am sorry to say I don’t, Harry. When I was a little girl I began to learn Latin, but I never got farther than ‘Do not irritate the wasp,’ and ‘The pavement is swimming with wine;’ and now, I am afraid, I could not even put that into Latin.”

This confession of ignorance was a great relief to Harry. It left him the superior in some things, at any rate, and he could now like and admire his aunt with a clear conscience, which he could not have done had she been a learned woman, knowing more on all subjects than he did. As it was, he turned over in his mind whether, as she evidently wished to know Latin, he might not condescend to teach it her.

“Dear me!” suddenly exclaimed Aunt Fanny, and up went the eye-glasses again; “this must be Miss Nightingale; or, can it be a provincial lady doctor? Pray introduce me, Miss Vernon.”

But Mabel could introduce herself.

“I’m not a lady doctor, thank you, or Miss Nightingale either; I’m Mrs. Wilson, and my children are all ill with the measles, and I’m nursing them; and what’s more, I can’t stay talking nonsense with you children any longer, for Rosa will be wanting her gruel.” And with the utmost gravity she retreated into the corner to attend to her duties. Aunt Fanny followed her, and begged to be allowed to prescribe. Mabel was delighted, for, as she said, though she could manage very well without calling in the doctor when her children had nothing worse than colds, it was another thing when they were “stay-

in-bed-ill." So Aunt Fanny put on a pair of real spectacles, in which she looked quite professional, and went the round of the sick beds; she conscientiously felt all the nine pulses and gave much valuable advice. She was still pointing out to the anxious mother that though mustard plasters were excellent things for colds on the chest, they were no longer recommended by London physicians in cases of measles, when Maud announced that tea was ready.

Mrs. Vernon had arranged that her sister should dine with her to-night in her own sitting-room.

"I wish you were coming to tea with us," said Jack; "why don't you?"

"Because I am going to dine with your mother instead. Don't you think she has the first claim?"

"Well, I suppose she has."

And Aunt Fanny went out, leaving the children at liberty to discuss her once more. As you have now been introduced to Aunt Fanny, and can form your own opinion of her, and as you know what sort of impression she had produced upon her nephews and nieces, there is no need that you should hear all the remarks they made about her over their tea. Enough, if I tell you that while Maud thought her nice, and Jack and Harry pronounced her a jolly girl, Mabel could only repeat over and over again, "Isn't she funny?"

CHAPTER III.

THE change that Fanny Arnott had told the children to expect in her by the morning was not to be detected when she came down to breakfast. She was very much the same person that they had all fallen in love with the evening before; the coils of hair, the gold eye-glasses, and the cooing voice were still there, and if the long grey gown had given place to a short blue walking dress, that was only important in so far as it obliged Maud to make another sudden change of opinion, for last night she had come to the conclusion that people ought always to dress in grey, and this morning she was ready to admire nothing but blue.

But if Aunt Fanny was not changed, the weather was. It was a lovely morning. The sun shone brightly on the dining-room windows, making the room so warm that, but for the sparkling hoar

frost on the trees outside, one might have fancied oneself in the middle of May; it was a day on which it was impossible not to be in good spirits, and after two days of confinement to the house it was especially welcome. Our party looked forward to a good walk; Aunt Fanny must be taken all over the grounds, into the village, and, if she could walk so far, to Dollington.

"How far is it?"

"A longish way; altogether about six miles by the time we get home."

Aunt Fanny thought she was equal to that. "But how about Mabel?" Mabel explained that though Aunt Fanny's prescription had done her children a wonderful deal of good, they were not quite well yet, and would not be able to spare her for long, so she should only go about the garden with the rest of the party, and when they went to the village she should come in.

"But before I am taken to see the wonders of Dollington and the village, may I not explore the house?" said Fanny. "It seems to be very old and quaint, and I have made up my mind that it is full of secret passages and haunted rooms."

"There are no secret passages," answered Maud; "and I am happy to say there are no haunted rooms; but there is a long gallery with oak panels which I believe is considered curious, and there is a corkscrew staircase leading to a tower-room."

"The tower-room sounds delightful. Pray take me there directly after breakfast."

As Fanny Arnott followed Harry, who had appointed himself guide to the exploring party, up the corkscrew staircase she amused her nephews and nieces a good deal by her enjoyment of its darkness, of its broken steps, and of the very cobwebs that, stretching across the narrow space between the walls, brushed their faces in what the rest of the party thought a very disagreeable manner.

"How funny you are, Aunt Fanny! I do believe you like cobwebs in your face."

"Certainly I do. Cobwebs across a staircase mean age, like grey hairs across a forehead, you know; and age in a house means mystery and romance."

"And you like romance?"

"Don't you?"

. "Yes, in books, but I never thought of looking for it in a house. Is your house in London romantic?"

"Not exactly. The rooms are all square, the staircase is broad enough for a Hansom cab to drive up it, and I believe the only cupboard in the house is devoted to housemaid's brushes."

"Then I suppose you don't like it?"

"Oh, yes, I do; it is very comfortable and convenient, and I have got a delightful room of my own, which you must come and see some day. But I was forgetting that you have stayed at our house, and even slept in my room. Did you not, Maud?"

"Yes, I believe I did; and I remember we thought it a very odd house indeed, for it was the first English house we had ever been in, and it was quite different, of course, from Indian houses."

"Take care," said Harry; "you are coming to a very dangerous step."

"Thanks for the warning, I was just going to break my neck. Perhaps, after all, the Hansom cab kind of staircase is better for real people to go up and down. But think what wonderful ascents and descents must have been made by this corkscrew staircase; of the undutiful daughters dragged by the hair to be immured by stern fathers in the tower-room, there to drag out a weary death-in-life; of the red-handed assassins escaping from the myrmidons of the law; of the faithful wives stealing up to carry food to husbands in difficulties! Oh! there is no end to the wonderful things that must have happened here. But, seriously, are there no real legends about the place?"

"I don't quite know," answered Maud, as they reached the top of the staircase, and stood by the door of the tower-room. "Once when we came up here with Cousin Frank, he told us a long story about a Cavalier who was hidden in this room, but I don't know if it was true."

They went into the room, and Fanny Arnott said it was just the place where an astrologer should live, and that she felt very much disposed to establish herself here for the time her visit lasted and study the stars.

"But what was Cousin Frank's story? Never mind whether it is true or not so long as it is a good one."

"I don't remember it very clearly. It was about a Roundhead squire who lived here once upon a time——"

"About the time of Cromwell, perhaps, or Charles II.?"

"Yes, I suppose so; and he had a brother who was a Royalist, and somehow the Royalist brother got into trouble, and he was being pursued by his enemies one day when he found himself close to the Hall (his old home, you know), so he thought he would appeal to his brother for protection. You see it was running some risk, as the brother was a horrid Roundhead——"

"What do you mean by a *horrid* Roundhead? I hope you are not a *horrid* Royalist."

"Oh, but I am! the Roundheads were all vulgar, and disagreeable, and ugly, and the Cavaliers were so brave, and unfortunate, and romantic. You ought to like the Cavaliers, I am sure, if you are so fond of everything that is romantic," said Maud, triumphantly.

"I don't feel converted yet," said Aunt Fanny; "but please go on with your story, if it is not too good for Roundhead ears."

"Let me see—where was I?"

"The romantic Cavalier was about to throw himself on the protection of the vulgar Roundhead."

"Oh, yes. Well, the squire was away, rather fortunately, the wife said (for she was at home), and so she promised to protect the Cavalier. And so she hid him in this room, and nobody in the house knew of his being here except herself; and one night—I mean every night—she used to bring him food; and one night her husband came home and found her just coming down from her visit to his brother. And then she refused to tell her secret, and he grew very angry and dashed up the staircase; and when he found a man in the room he drew his sword and killed him. And then I really don't know what happened."

"Oh, but I do!" said Fanny: "the infuriated husband plunged his sword into the heart of the refugee, who, with his dying breath, called him 'Brother.' That word carried with it a revelation. In an agony of remorse the unhappy wretch turned the fatal weapon upon his own breast. The wife, who with trembling steps had followed her husband up the tortuous staircase, reached the chamber in time to witness, but not prevent, the fatal deed.—But she did her duty to the last; she went mad on the spot, and, till the day of her death, wandered ceaselessly through the desolate corridors, moaning and wringing her hands. It is even believed," and Fanny dropped her voice solemnly, "that she wanders there now; and the villagers relate that sometimes, at the dead of night, a white figure may be seen standing on the

battlements and wringing her hands; and once, when the wind happened to be blowing in the right direction (that is, perpendicularly down from the chimney-tops), a voice was heard to cry, 'I am undone!' Others, again, believe that she took, after death, the body of a white mouse, and that in that form she haunts the scene of the tragedy. Look there!"

They all looked where Aunt Fanny pointed; a little white mouse had stolen out from under the wainscoting. As the children started round it took fright and crept back into its hiding-place. They looked at their aunt; there was a twinkle in her eye that was reassuring, and they ventured to laugh.

"Aunt Fanny, how can you?"

"How can you? I tell you a tragical story at which your hair should stand on end and your blood run cold, and you treat it all as a joke."

The appearance of the mouse interested Jack exceedingly, for he had a truly barbarous and boyish passion for catching and killing all kinds of animals. His room was a perfect museum of traps, catapulta, and every variety of murderous instrument. He was now busy examining the wainscoting with a view to placing a trap in the most advantageous position. Suddenly the mouse appeared again.

"Oh, for a trap!" sighed Jack.

"Oh, for a trap, a trap, a trap!" echoed Aunt Fanny; "you remind one of the Mayor of Hamelin."

"Who is the Mayor of Hamelin?" asked Maud and Harry at once.

"What! don't you know the Mayor of Hamelin and the wonderful piper? Oh! most benighted children, sit down at once and be enlightened."

And Aunt Fanny sat down on an old chest that was the only piece of furniture in the tower-room, and while the four children sat at her feet she repeated Mr. Browning's delightful ballad of "The Pied Piper of Hamelin," much to the amusement of her audience. After which Harry remarked, that if they did not soon start for their walk, they would not get home in time for dinner; and as everybody agreed with him, after a race along the gallery, in which Harry beat Aunt Fanny by what Jack called "half a nothing," they all separated to make ready.

The walk was a very pleasant one. A sharp frost following upon a night of heavy mist, had clothed every tree and shrub with a garment of sparkling white, which the sun, though shining brightly, had not yet succeeded in melting. The place, which was really very pretty, showed to great advantage, and the children were delighted with their aunt's admiration of it. She must see every nook and corner—the field that was best for cricket; the shrubbery where they played hide and seek on summer evenings till it was so dark that though hiding was easy enough, finding was a sheer impossibility; the old bowling-green that made the smoothest croquet-ground in the county; the wood-yard where they played at settlers and built log-houses; the stables, the hen-house, and, last of all, the pond.

"Do you skate, Aunt Fanny?" asked Harry, as they stood looking at the ice, which, never quite dissolved by the rain of the last two days, was already begining to recover itself.

"I tried once, ever so many years ago, but I did not get on very well. I used to stagger about with a broomstick like a witch, and, whenever any one came within ten yards of me at a pace quicker than that of a snail, I used to be frightened out of my senses. Since then I have had no opportunity of improving myself, but if this frost lasts, you will be able to give me some lessons."

Harry was conscious of not having been himself over-steady on his skates last winter, but having heard that skaters always made progress in their art in some mysterious way, that is quite independent of practice, during the summer's necessary rest, and seldom lacking in confidence in his own powers, he unhesitatingly undertook to be his aunt's instructor, and to push her about as much as she liked in a chair, "for, after all, that is the best kind of skating for ladies." Aunt Fanny was properly grateful, but said she was a strong-minded woman, and thought a more independent mode of locomotion at once safer and pleasanter, even on the ice. Then arose the question of skates. Fanny Arnott had none; Jack thought there was a pair in the cupboard that would do for her, but Maud was positive that they would be too large, and that they were, besides, horrid old things; upon which Harry bethought himself of a pair he had seen in the shop at Dollington that would be the very thing. This reminded them of their intention of walking to Dollington, but as the morning was nearly gone, it was decided to give up the expedition for to-day,

and to content themselves with the shorter walk to the village, for which there yet remained time, if they made haste. Mabel, faithful to her sick dolls, turned homewards, and the others set out without further dawdling. But they were not to get much beyond the grounds that day. They were hardly out of the gate, when Jack cried "Holloa, I see Cousin Frank. How jolly!" and he and Harry ran forward to meet their cousin.

"Do you know Cousin Frank, Aunt Fanny?" asked Maud.

"No, I do not; you will have to introduce me."

"But, I shall be too shy."

"Is he a very awful person then?"

"Oh, dear no!" laughed Maud. Cousin Frank an awful person was a good idea.

"Then I suppose it is of me you are afraid?"

"I don't think I'm afraid of either of you, but I don't know how to introduce people."

"Oh, that's easily learnt. You have only to say, 'Cousin Frank, allow me to present you to my aunt, Miss Arnott, who has kindly consented to leave the giddy whirl of London dissipation and enliven our rural home by her presence during the Christmas vacation.' Then you must turn to me and say, 'Dearest aunt, let me present to you my cousin, the Rev. Francis Mildmay, Rector of Everton;' we shall then shake hands and inquire after each other's health. Now, if you make haste, there will be time for a rehearsal before he comes up." Aunt Fanny looked so absurd that Maud could only laugh, and she was still laughing in a very undignified manner when Mr. Mildmay and the boys came up. Of course they wanted to know what the joke was.

"Oh! only Aunt Fanny," said Maud; and then Cousin Frank took off his hat and said they must introduce him to Miss Arnott, and straightway introduced himself, which simplified matters considerably.

As Mr. Mildmay said that he was on his way to the Hall, they all turned back with him. As they walked, he explained that he had come over with the intention of asking the children to help him to get up some Christmas treat for his school-children. The entertainment must take place on that day week, and he had not the remotest idea of what amusement to provide, beyond tea and buns.

Could they suggest anything? Aunt Fanny suggested a Christmas-tree. "I know," she said, "that the idea is not very original, and that everybody is supposed to be tired of Christmas-trees, but then, as far as I can make out, people are supposed to be tired of everything now-a-days." Mr. Mildmay smiled. "And you, I imagine, are not yet tired of anything."

"No, indeed, I am not. And as for Christmas-trees, I am exceedingly fond of them, and I believe I always shall be, if I live to be a hundred. And I don't think many of your school-children can have had more opportunities of getting tired of them than I have. But then, you know, if you have a tree at all, you must have a good one, not a miserable stunted shrub about three feet high, with half-a-dozen oranges and gilded balls stuck about it. It must be a *very* good one."

Certainly," said Mr. Mildmay; "will you undertake the management?"

"With pleasure."

And then they all fell to, discussing the details—the number of children for whom presents were to be provided, the extent of the funds to be expended, and the special tastes and wishes of individual boys and girls, where these happened to be known.

When they reached home they found Mrs. Vernon waiting luncheon for them. She had no headache or backache to-day, and she gave Frank Mildmay a brighter welcome than he ever remembered to have received from her before; the children, too, were struck by their mother's cheerful tone and more frequent smiles. Was it merely the effect of the glorious sunshine without, or was it, rather, the reflection of Aunt Fanny's brightness? There are some people whose very presence in the house does one more good than all the physic in all the chemists' shops in London, and certainly Fanny Arnott was one of these. She was ready to take an interest in anything that interested anybody else, to understand what everybody meant, and remember everybody's likings and dislikings; she could talk, and, what is more rare, she could listen, she could make jokes herself, and laugh at other people's, and above all, she could make fun of people in such a pleasant, kindly way, that it was difficult to say whether it was pleasanter to be laughed at with, or laughed at by, Fanny Arnott. Mabel was, as a rule, very sensitive on the score of her dolls, and inclined to take a very serious view of any jokes made at their expense; yet she had this morning been over-

heard confiding to Rosa that "Aunt Fanny was the nicest, dearest person in the world, and that she did not know why it was, but she did not at all mind being laughed at by her;" to which Rosa had replied in a voice that was strangely like Mabel's own, "Nor do I, mamma."

The Christmas treat was much talked of at luncheon, and Mrs. Vernon said they might apply to the gardener for as large a tree as would stand conveniently in the schoolroom, and Fanny Arnott took out her note-book to write down all the things that were wanted to make a really good Christmas-tree. Of course there must be plenty of dolls for the girls, and knives for the boys, besides bats, traps, balls, and carts and horses, for both boys and girls. Then there must be crackers and sugarplums, and tinsel flowers and coloured tapers. The list was becoming formidable, and Mr. Mildmay said "it was no wonder Miss Arnott was fond of Christmas-trees, for clearly she was used to very grand ones indeed," and he added a caution against dragging him into ruinous expense.

"You had better come with us to Dollington," suggested Harry, "and see that she does not spend too much money."

"When are you going?"

"Oh, this afternoon, I suppose."

"But I don't suppose anything of the kind," put in Mrs. Vernon.

"Neither do I," said Fanny.


"I am very glad of it," returned her sister. "You have been walking about all the morning, and will be very tired if you attempt so long a walk this afternoon."

"Well then, when shall we go?" asked Harry, in a tone of disappointment. "To-morrow is Sunday."

"Why not on Monday afternoon?" said Fanny. And so it was settled that on Monday afternoon Mr. Mildmay should meet them at the toy-shop in Dollington for a good bout of shopping, after which he was to come home with them and spend the evening at the Hall.

(To be continued.)

VALENTINES.

“ IS very strange, I cannot think
 What makes the post so late to-day;
 'Tis nearly nine, and yet no bag;
 What can have caused this strange delay?”

The children in their places sit,
 And, after many nods and signs,
 The eldest of them boldly says,
 “Papa, it is the valentines!”

“Valentines!” he repeats, and stares;
 “Why, dear, what difference can they make?
 It cannot be the valentines;
 There must have been some strange mistake.”

He cannot understand, they know,
 So, by long habit, say no more;
 But still he grumbles, and they all
 Expectant sit, and watch the door.

At last the post-bag comes; papa,
 Astonished at their eager looks,
 Opens it quickly, and, surprised,
 Finds the first letter is the cook's.

“Here, Sarah, take it!” “Thank you, sir;”
 But still she waits as if for more.
 “Papa, be quick!” pet Annie cries;
 “I wonder who the next one's for?”

“For me, Miss Annie, I should think;
 I wonder who would write to *you*?”
 But lo! papa mistaken was,
 For Annie's was the next he drew.

Astonished, one by one he takes,
 With all the household waiting round;
 Nurse coming down, “For baby, sir.”
 A letter straight for her is found.

Mamma has many, and papa
 (Though most of his are large and blue),
 And suddenly there is a cry,
 “Why, baby, here is one for you!”

What screams! as many hands stretch forth
To break the seal of baby's letter;
Till some one says, "No, let mamma;"
And all agree that would be better.

How baby crows as in both hands
He holds the picture that is his.
"Your first, my darling," says mamma,
Who takes him with a loving kiss.

What valentines! and best of all,
Scarce one can tell from whence they come;
Only some say, "How good the boys
Are to remember those at home!"

Papa sits gravely in his place,
Watching the group with twinkling eye;
Not understanding half the fuss,
His letters still unopened lie.

"See if you have one—do, papa!"
"Yes, do! what fun!—that would be fine!"
"What nonsense, Alice! who is there
Would send papa a valentine?"

But still the clamour does not cease,
So, half in fun, papa complies,
And opens all his envelopes
Before a dozen eager eyes.

"Bless me! what's this? A bill? oh no!
A picture? Why, what can it be?
Here is a fellow with a heart;
Surely it can't be meant for me!

"It makes me blush, I must be off:
Mamma, I shan't be home to dine.
I never heard of such a thing—
A man like me a valentine!"


The children laugh, ah! cunning rogues,
They know quite well the guilty one.
"Oh, what a trick! how he did stare!
I never had such jolly fun!"

"Come, come, dear children, this won't do,
'Tis time for lessons," says mamma;
"Be quick and put the letters up.
Flo, say good-bye to dear papa."

Then to the business of the day
The children, gay and pleased, disperse;
The elders to their daily tasks,
The young ones to the care of nurse.
Ah! surely in this world of gloom,
All little spots that brightly shine
Should be encouraged more to glow
Like the gay day of Valentine.

E. M. L.

WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY.

 **LAST** year I left home and friends for the first time in my life, to be governess to three children, in a family who knew but little of me, and of whom I knew nothing. I think I am lively and cheerful by nature, but I felt a little dull and forlorn as, on the second evening of my arrival, I found myself seated near the schoolroom fire, with my three pupils round me.

It was a March day, and there had been heavy hail showers at intervals. One was pattering at that moment against the window as I rose to draw the curtain and shut out all light but that of the fire. Lessons were over, and the "idle hour," as the children called it, from five to six o'clock, rather frightened me. After six they went downstairs, and did not come back till bedtime; but now, how to amuse them was the question.

There they sat looking sometimes at me, sometimes at one another, two girls and a boy—Blanche, Kitty, and Charlie Russell—from nine to fifteen years old respectively, beginning with Blanche, who was the eldest. I had a little brother at home, but I had never had anything to do with girls; and as I looked first at Blanche's demure face, which said nothing, and then at Kitty, who was trying to smother a succession of giggles, a hopeless feeling came over me that I had undertaken more than I could manage. I should have proposed a good game of romps had I been less shy, but how can you play "blind man's buff," or "hunt the slipper," or "post," with three strange children of whom you are in decided awe yourself, though they do not look the least bit afraid of you? They had said that their last governess always told them stories at this hour, and they evidently expected me to do the same. Now I was not a good hand at story-telling, and if I had

been, my ideas would all have vanished under the gaze of those three pair of lively eyes, which said, as plainly as if the tongues had spoken, "We wonder if you are good for anything but lessons! We should think not." I took up the poker, and shivering, half from nervousness, said, "I was in a different part of the world, with very different weather, this day last year." The eyes looked more lively than ever, but there was no reply, only another half giggle from Kitty.

"Would you like to hear about my foreign tour?" I said again, in desperation.

"But that won't be a story," growled Charlie, nursing his foot.

Blanche said, "Hush, Charlie!" reprovingly, and turning to me, added, "if Charlie is troublesome he must be turned out of the room. Miss Hay. Miss Spencer sometimes had to do it, and mamma said she was quite right."

"Well, but he is quite right in saying it won't be a story," I said, half laughing; "I only meant that I was in Italy."

"Italy! Have you really been in Italy?" chorussed the two girls.

"Yes, really," I said, "for two months last year. I will show you my journey on the map, at our geography lesson to-morrow."

"But what was it like? What did you see? Was it very beautiful?" were the next questions.

This was hopeful. "It was very beautiful," I answered, "but as for telling you what it was like, or what I saw, it would take days and weeks to do that. Come," I cried, growing cheerful with the bright idea that struck me, "if you like, I will write down for you short accounts of some of the different things I saw abroad, and read one every now and then at this hour. Would you care for it?"

"Oh, yes," said Blanche and Kitty, "we should like it very much indeed; but please tell us some little thing now. Only I don't know about Charlie," added Blanche, doubtfully, looking at him; "I am afraid he'll fidget."

"Well," I said, "he may fidget as much as he likes in play-time; I don't mind it in the least." Blanche opened very wide eyes. "Come. Charlie, and sit by me; I think you will like to hear. You need not listen another time unless you like. I am going to tell you how I first saw the Mediterranean Sea.

"I had been travelling all night in the railway from Paris to Marseilles——"

"Ah! what was it like?" interrupted Kitty.

"Well, much the same as a night journey in England," said I, "except that our fellow travellers were French. There was an old gentleman who made himself very agreeable when he was not asleep, and a young couple who ate up the contents of a whole bag of chocolate bon-bons between their luncheon and dinner, and there was myself and my mother, and two English friends. We had slept a little by fits and starts during the night, but about five o'clock we were all wide awake. We were only half an hour from the end of our journey, and we let down the window of the carriage to get the fresh morning air, and looked eagerly out."

"How cold it must have been, and quite dark!" said Blanche, shivering.

"Not at all. There had been some heavy rain in the night, but that was all gone, and everything looked fresh and deliciously warm and light. Remember, I was a great deal farther south than you have ever been in your life."

"But the sea, where was it?" asked Kitty.

"I am coming to it. 'There it is!' cried one of my friends; but no. We rushed into a tiresome cutting of some miles, and could see nothing but now and then a glimpse of the sky, which instead of being grey, as it would have been at that hour in England, was the clearest and darkest blue I ever saw. Presently we came out into the open ground again, and there it was, the Mediterranean Sea, of which you have heard, and read, and learnt so much, that I daresay it seems quite a natural and commonplace thing to see, and not worth talking about. But wait till I describe it as I saw it sleeping in the dawn of that early March morning.

"The shore was flat, and covered with almond trees in a perfect flush of pink blossom, and every now and then a small, square white house came into view, not at all like any house I had ever actually seen, though very like those I had often looked at in pictures and sketches; flat-roofed, with bright green shutters, telling of a hot climate. Behind this bright foreground the sea lay like a large lake, perfectly smooth, with low headlands stretching into it, and a clear purple light brooding over the still water. The light was pale and subdued, but there was nothing like mist; every low cliff and rock stood out distinctly and well defined, and the sky above was a deep, dark, intense blue. I hardly know how to make you understand the

magical effect of this wonderful *something* which was neither light nor colour, and yet seemed to partake of both; for it was distinct purple, like a pale amethyst, and reflected itself on every object which it bathed with its own pure transparency. Shall I tell you what it most reminds me of, as I think of it?"

"Yes, please do," from the girls.

"Well, I think it was most like the calm cheerfulness of a really holy character: kind and gentle, and full of soft peace and love. No mist of anger, or roughness, or prejudice, to prevent the eye from seeing the full beauty of holiness, just as there was no mist or cloud that morning to obscure in the least degree the objects around, and nothing solemn or severe either, to dishearten or discourage; but a character which has been softened and toned down to one mellow, even tint, like the beautiful pale purple, and smiles through kind, cheerful, and tender eyes."

"That's grandmamma," said Charlie, suddenly, lifting his curly head from my knee, against which he had leant it.

"Yes," said Kitty, "how curious. Do you know her, Miss Hay?"

"No," said I.

"Well, you have described her exactly. Papa says she is beautifully good. I shall think of the Mediterranean Sea when I see her again. Please go on."

"There is not much more to say. Two small boats with square white sails shot into view as we looked, and glided along over the water; and as we watched them, first one and then the other grew bright with a sudden glory, and we knew that the sun had risen. The strange and beautiful purple light soon faded, and we arrived at Marseilles in the full blaze of a dazzling summer sunshine."

"Summer in March! Oh, Miss Hay."

"Yes, Kitty, it was really hot and blazing at Marseilles on that 14th of March, but I daresay there may have been some cold weather afterwards, only I did not stop to see. I went straight on by sea across the Gulf of Genoa."

"I call it a 'word picture,'" said Blanche, who had not spoken until now.

"Thank you for the pretty compliment, Blanche," said I, "and for a very pretty name to put at the top of my first written sketch. I promise to have one ready for Monday evening."

BOOK NOTICES.



THROUGH the Looking Glass, and what Alice found there. By Lewis Carroll. (Macmillan and Co.) This is undoubtedly the book of the season, long looked for in hundreds, we believe, indeed, thousands of homes, to which the rumour had reached that a book with this extraordinary title was in course of preparation by the author of "Alice's Adventures in Wonderland." Its actual appearance has created quite a sensation in the reading public, and justly so, though personally we cling with fondest remembrance to Alice's first appearance. Her second *debut* is highly attractive and interesting; a more ingenious idea than that of the little girl dreaming of stepping into the room through the looking-glass can hardly be imagined, and her adventures in that supposititious country are both weird and fanciful. The later chapters especially, in which Alice becomes Queen, and is in company with the Red and White Queens of the chess-board, are particularly brilliant and amusing. We are also charmed to meet with some ballads and songs quite in the old style. Of these the Walrus and the Carpenter with the Oysters, and Humpty Dumpty's song about the Fishes, have attracted our special admiration. Mr. Tenniel has outdone himself in his illustrations, which preserve the character of the little girl as perfectly as ever. We are not surprised to hear of the wonderful success that the book has already met with, and heartily wish it more and more.

"Echoes." By E. M. H. (Bell and Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden.) We have here three pretty and poetically told stories by the author of the "Four Messengers," which throw a halo over

the commonplace incidents of life by treating them in a gracefully romantic manner. The first tale exhibits the evil of praising the talents of clever children to the disparagement of others who have not been equally endowed, and become consequently disheartened for their more up-hill labours. The book is prettily got up, and would form a very acceptable present for girls of twelve and upwards.

"The Man in the Moon" and other stories. (James Maclehose, Glasgow.) This fantastic collection of nonsensical stories is entirely adapted for nursery reading, and we doubt not will be highly appreciated by the little ones, to whom facts and morals are unnecessary requirements, and the more extravagant and amusing incidents are, the better. The book is abundantly adorned with outline illustrations, somewhat in the style of E. Lear's "Book of Nonsense."

"The Golden Rule," and "Hot Coals." (S. W. Partridge and Co., Paternoster Row.) These little volumes form part of a series, the "Tiny Library," and are attractively printed in large clear type. The stories contain good teaching, and are suited for children's reading in village libraries.

"Taffy, the Wilful Pony." (Partridge and Co., Paternoster Row.) Taffy's feats and adventures are amusing in the extreme, and have, in addition, the charm of being founded on fact. We recommend this little volume specially to the attention of boy readers.

"Elsie's Dowry; a Tale of the Franco-German War." By Emma Leslie. (Marlborough and Co., 4, Ave Maria Lane, London.) The scenes amidst which this tale is laid are sufficient to secure the

interest and attention of the reader. The story is life-like and well told. Elsie, a young Prussian girl, whose artistic tastes lead her to grow weary of the spinning and bleaching of her dowry of *linen*, and to aspire after lessons in a better school of drawing than her German home affords, goes to Paris to study, and thus becomes involved in friendship with many French people, and forms an attachment for an artist there. On the outbreak

of the war much confusion and distress arises, but the tale ends happily by leaving the young French and German soldiers, in whom the reader's interest has been specially awakened, successfully tended under their wounds in a hospital at Versailles, to which Elsie has made a present of her despised dowry linen for the use of the patients. On their recovery the various couples are happily married.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



DO. Several correspondents write to say that your quotation about Kilmeny is from "The Queen's Wake," by James Hogg, the Ettrick shepherd.

"Puck." "Lillie" thinks you will "find all necessary instructions about white mice in the 'Boy's Own Book.'"

"Captain Ogilvie." The lines you ask for are in Wordsworth's description of "A True Woman."

Three correspondents inform "Piggie" that the quotation, "O when shall Englishmen," &c., is in a poem by Drayton, "The Battle of Agincourt."

"Eve." Your sentence from Shakespeare is in Macbeth, Act 1, Scene 7.

"F. C." We find the following account of the origin of "Whigs and Tories" in Pulleyn's "Etymological Compendium:"

"Whig and Tory, the epoch of 1680. The first was a name of reproach, given by the Court party to their antagonists, for resembling the principles of the Whigs, or fanatical conventiclers in Scotland; and the other was given by the country party to that of the Court, comparing them to the Tories, or Popish robbers in Ireland. They formerly were called Whigs, from Whiggamors, a name given to the Scots in the south-west, who, for want of corn in that quarter,

used annually to repair to Leith to buy stores that came from the north, and all that drove were called Whiggamors, or Whiggs, from the term *whiggam*, which they used in driving their horses. In the year 1638 the Presbyterian ministers incited an insurrection against the Court, and marched with the people to Edinburgh; this was called 'the Whiggamor's Inroad,' and after this, all who opposed administration were called Whigs; hence the term was adopted in England."

Malone says that the term Tory is derived from an Irish word, *toree*, give me (your money). The character of the Tories is thus noticed by Glanville, in one of his sermons, long before the political distinction existed: "Let such men quit all pretences to civility and breeding; they are ruder than *Tories* and wild Americans." Tory hunting was almost viewed in the light of a pastime. An old rhyme, in allusion to this sport, is still orally current in the south of Ireland, and a decided favourite in the nursery collection:

"Ho! Master Teague, what is your story?
I went to the wood, and I kill'd a Tory:
I went to the wood, and I kill'd another—
Was it the same, or was it his brother?"

"I hunted him in, and I hunted him out,
Three times through the bog, about and about;
When out of a bush I saw his head,
So I fired my gun, and I shot him dead."

"Rose of York" begs to thank the correspondents who have kindly sent her copies of the poem she asked for.

"J. M. S. M." "Sir William Jones" was the author of the verse you ask about.

Aunt Judy can tell "An Admiring Nephew" very little about the origin of the National Anthem. She was asked some months ago about the authorship of it, and gave all the information she could collect in the "Correspondence" of our Number for April, 1870, to which she must refer him.

"Dame Durden" asks for a receipt for staining Easter Eggs a *bright green, blue, pink, or dark crimson colour*. She has tried to paint them with water and oil colours, but found the result very dull, and, in fact, a failure.

In "Notes and Queries," Series 1, vol. ii., p. 52, is the following account: "On Easter Monday and Tuesday the inhabitants assemble in certain adjacent meadows, the children all provided with stores of hard-boiled eggs, coloured and ornamented in various ways, *some being dyed an even colour with logwood, cochineal, &c., others stained (often in a rather elegant manner) by being boiled in shreds of parti-coloured ribbons, and others, again, covered with gilding.*" Perhaps some of our readers can supply more practical particulars of the way in which to accomplish this feat.

"Louie." Aunt Judy is willing to look at any MSS. sent to her on approval, but must warn you that she has been made very critical on the subject of Buried Towns, &c., by the highly original ones sent to her by "E. M. L.," which have appeared at various times in the Magazine.

"Don Giovanni." Aunt Judy does not know whether Sir W. Jenner is any connection of Dr. E. Jenner, but you will find a short biography of him in the "Illustrated London News," Dec. 23rd,

1871. (2) You must apply to Messrs. Strahan, the publishers of the magazine you mention. (3) "The shudd'ring tenant," &c., is in Goldsmith's "Traveler."

"Xercahldiah" asks where she can find the words "Heaven's artillery" used in speaking of thunder?

"May" has a brooch on which are the letters "M. E. T." (or "E. T. M.") as a monogram, and she would like to know what they stand for?

"M." asks who wrote the following lines:

"The flush of life may well be seen
Thrilling back over hills and valleys,
The cowslip startles in meadows green,
The buttercup catches the sun in its chalice,
And there's never a leaf or a blade too mean
To be some happy creature's palace."

"Dick" offers fifty different crests and monograms for six rare foreign stamps. Address, M. R. Swabey, Langley Marish, Slough, Bucks.

"Toby" asks if any one will send her some Egyptian, South American, or West Indian stamps, in exchange for other foreign ones? Address, 8, Camden Crescent, Dover.

Can any one tell "Katie" of a "nice book of cryptographs and acrostics?"

"A Subscriber." To eat (*vide* Johnson's and Richardson's Dictionaries) signifies to *consume* food, by whatever means it is done; thus both *eaten your soup*, or *drunk your soup*, would be correct, and either of them preferable to *taken your soup*, which, although in use, is inaccurate.

"A. B. B." wants to know "if there is any Institution into which a deformed little girl, 7 years old, can be got." Does he mean as a *permanency*, or only temporarily, for the treatment of her disease? If the *latter*, Aunt Judy would be glad to offer her an in-patient's ticket for the Children's Hospital, 49, Great Ormond Street, London.

"Mrs. Bailey" and "Effie." A list of the most useful articles of clothing to be made by the members of the Busy Bee Working Society for the children in the Hospital was given in our "Correspondence" last month. The work may be sent in at any time to the Secretary, 49, Great Ormond Street, by whom it will be gladly received.

"A Chinese Pigmy." The first number of our Magazine was published in May, 1866. Perhaps some of our readers can say who the lines you ask for were written by:

"Lo! streams that April could not check
Are patient of thy rule,
Gurgling in glistening water-break,
Loltering in glassy pool.

"Keep, lovely May, as if by magic touch
Of self-restraining art,
This modest charm of not too much,
Part seen, imagined part."

We quote the following account of Twelfth Night from Pulleyn's "Etymological Compendium."

"There is a difference of opinion as to the origin of Twelfth Day. Brand says, 'That though its customs vary in different countries, yet they concur in the same end, this is, to do honour to the Eastern Magi.' He afterwards observes, 'That the practices of choosing king on Twelfth Day is similar to a custom that existed among the ancient Greeks and Romans, who, on the festival days of Saturn, about that season of the year, drew lots for kingdoms, and like kings exercised their temporary authority.' The Epiphany is called Twelfth Day because it falls on the twelfth day after Christmas Day. Epiphany signifies Manifestation, and is applied to this because it is the day whereon Christ was manifested to the Gentiles.'" Aunt Judy fancies that she has seen one syllable of your *nom de plume* in other letters from Hampstead. She is glad to answer all the inquiries that she can, but hopes you will take some little trouble about hunt-

ing for quotations yourself before applying to her. She could not insert the whole of the verse you ask about this time, as there is some mistake in it.

"Edith" asks if any one can tell her the names of some German magazines which contain interesting "grown-up" tales, with the price, and publisher's address. She does not want a *fashion* magazine.

"Fiorella." Aunt Judy is much obliged for your offer, but is unable to supply you with the work mentioned.

"A. R. A." Your request was too late to be complied with.

"Nellie B." Aunt Judy cannot imagine how it is that you are still labouring under the impression that old stamps are of any use for getting children into hospitals, &c., she has so often uttered a protest on this point, and explained that they are utterly useless, save for such purposes as making stamp toy snakes, &c.

"Eleonore de Castella," Yering, Melbourne. The verse you inquire about was written by a modern poet, the Hon. George Sydney Smythe. As to the *best* translation of the "Iliad," there may be several opinions; but, on the whole, Aunt Judy thinks that Lord Derby's must have precedence. Pope's version was a paraphrase. If, however, you care to see a specimen of perfect rendering, look at the few lines given by Alfred Tennyson among his "experiments" at the end of "Enoch Arden." Miss Yonge, in her History of Christian Names (vol. i., p. 161), says, that "'Eleonore' is only another form of the Greek Helene. Elena in Italy, it assumed the form of Aliénor among the Romanesque populations of Provence, who, though speaking a Latin tongue, greatly altered and disguised the words. Indeed there are some who derive this name from *eleos* (pity), but there is much greater reason to suppose it another variety of Helena, not more changed than many other Provençal

names." It is a great pleasure to find that the Magazine is welcomed by such distant little readers.

The "Misses Latter" have two or three postage stamp snakes, which they would be very glad to sell to any one who would forward them by post 5s. in stamps, and their address. The money is to be devoted to Church purposes. The Misses Latter would of course pay the expense of sending the snakes. Address, North Mimms Vicarage, Hatfield, Herts.

"Katherine Willis" has a few thousand English penny stamps, which she is willing to exchange. If any one will send her foreign stamps, and say how many English are wanted in exchange for each, she will take those she wants, and return the rest. Katherine Willis has also a few foreign stamps to exchange. Address, Trimley St. Mary, near Ipswich.

"H. S." has two used old English envelopes, which were issued about the year 1840, before the time of stamps, with the outlines of men, elephants, &c., on the envelope, which he is willing to dispose of at 10s. each; they are in pretty good preservation. Address, Mrs. Moss, Bentley, Brentwood, Essex.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, January 15th, 1872.

In the last number of the Magazine the new patient of "Aunt Judy's Cot" was introduced to the readers under the name of "Toby;" her proper name is Elizabeth C—. Some young friends having inquired the reason of the former name being given, it may be stated that something quaint about the little thing led the nurse to call her "Toby" when first brought to the Hospital, and that name was immediately adopted by all her companions as being very applicable: readily recognising her new name,

"Toby" has become quite a favourite with all who have to do with her, as much from her pretty baby ways as from her sweet temper. Her progress towards recovery is satisfactory, although, at present, but slow. In common with all the other little patients, "Toby" greatly enjoyed the Christmas-tree, and the treat given to the children. It would occupy more space than can be devoted to this Report to describe all that took place on that occasion; it must suffice to say that the Christmas-tree was a very large one, sent from Aberdeen to London by one of the kind friends who is much interested in the Hospital. After the distribution of numberless attractive articles from the tree, a magic lantern with amusing pictures entertained the children for nearly an hour. Gifts of toys and books to each patient closed the children's fête, and it will doubtless be long remembered by the little ones, to nearly all of whom such a festival was a novelty.

Little Annie H—, "Toby's" predecessor in the "Aunt Judy's Cot," was among the visitors at the Christmas treat, but the unusual bustle and excitement was not congenial to her quiet habits, and at first she was much disquieted, but became more contented and inclined to look about her, after a little petting and comforting by her former nurse.

One of "Toby's" great friends is the occupant of an adjoining cot, named Alexandrine T—, whose case is one of much interest; her sufferings, which have been very great, are all the result of terrible ill-treatment by the persons who had charge of her after the death of her mother. The change from a home of neglect and want to one where, with gentle treatment, she is surrounded with every comfort, and receives nothing but kindness from all about her, has produced a wonderful change, and from the very day after her admission she became the most patient and contented little girl ever remembered in the Hospital. The love

that had been so long checked now pours out in such a rich stream that it must make itself manifest to everybody, and it is no easy matter, at times, to escape from her affectionate embraces, or rather, as she calls them, her "hearty hugs." She is improving rapidly, but it is feared that she will bear the marks of her early sufferings throughout her life.

Some of Aunt Judy's readers have inquired whether the little ones at the Convalescent Branch, Cromwell House, were brought to the Hospital to assist at the Christmas treat; it will afford the young friends pleasure to know that a special Christmas treat was provided for them at Cromwell House: the number of patients having been increased to fifty-two (of whom about thirty are unable to leave their beds), it was considered advisable to have a separate entertainment for them. A large number of the friends of the Charity assembled to join in the pleasures of the little folk, and the large ward for girls (formerly General Ireton's drawing-room) never looked more gay and attractive than on that occasion.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Col," received to January 15th, 1872.

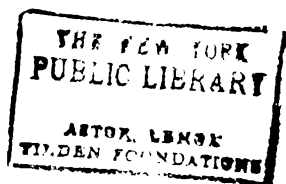
	£	s.	d.
Proceeds of the Home Bazaar at Spy Park	29	8	9
The Grandchildren of Charles Dickens, Gadshill Place, Rochester	2	2	0
Mrs. Howlett, West Hill, St. Leonards-on-sea (annual)	1	1	0
A. G. (monthly)	0	0	3
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
Mrs. C. M. Griffith, 31. Hyde Park Square (annual)	0	10	0
Elizabeth (annual)	0	2	6
Helen (collected—quarterly)	0	16	6
May, 2s. 6d., Little Ethel, 2s. 6d., Newbury (annual)	0	5	0
Little Etta (monthly)	0	0	6

	£	s.	d.
Mrs. T. Dawson, jun., Poundsworth Driffeld (annual)	0	2	6
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Susan and Harriett (monthly), 2s., and an addition of 3s. for the new year	0	5	0
C. E. P., 3s., E. M. P., 1s., Willie P., 1s., Mrs. Taylor and Children, 6s., C. Parkin, 2s. 6d.	0	13	6
D., Clifton.	0	5	0
Carrie and her four brothers, Folkestone	0	7	0
Aunt Lizzie and Bessie (collected)	2	0	0
E. E. F. W.	0	0	6
E. M. R. T., Hersham, Esher, Surrey	0	5	0
Madeline, Louisa, Luta, and Mabel, also eleven scrap-books, and sixteen Christmas cards	0	7	6
Collected by Mary Gordon: Arthur, 2s., Ellie, 2s., Mary, 2s., Johnnie, 2s., Pennie, 2s., Archie, 1s., Mamma, 2s., Stephen, 2s.	0	15	0
Alma, Durham (collected)	0	10	0
G. M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
S. D. Spicer, Spy Park, collected for purchase of oranges	0	10	0
Philip, 1s., Arthur, 1s., George, 1s., Edgar, 1s., Maud, 1s., Colingwood, 1s., P. R., 1s. 6d., T. E. R., 1s.	0	8	6
Mary, Stella, and Eldred, contents of money-box	0	4	3
Nelly Lumsden, Heathfield Villa, Bovey Tracey	1	0	0
Z. A.	0	2	6
The proceeds of a Children's Bazaar	2	8	0
Eliza, Ellen, Maria, Willie, and Olive, St. Andrew's Home, Weybread	0	1	8
The Children at Mount Vernon	0	3	0
F. H. Trower, and Little Busy Bee, "Fees".	0	2	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Children on the borders of Exmoor	0	5	6	"The Jabberwock, 1s., The Walrus, 3s., The Carpenter, 3s., The Oysters, 2s., The White Queen, 5s., The Red Queen, 5s., The Bander-snatch, 1s., The Close, Lichfield	1	0	0
J. E., and W. B.	0	5	0	"Grandma Weasel, 4d., Limpel, 6d., Cuchfield Cuckoo, 6d., Stick-in-time, 7d., Jack Tar and Neddy, 1s. 3d., Fidget, 6d., Fat-back, 6d., Ginks' Baby, 1d."	0	4	3
Francis Bingham Mildmay, 46 Berkeley Square	0	3	6	Florence, Blanche, and Evelyn Trench	0	3	3
Speedwell (collected)	0	7	6	"Nun"	0	1	6
Papa, 2s. 6d., Mamma, 2s. 6d., Aunt, 2s. 6., Mamie, 1s. 6d., Little Em'ly, 1s. 6d., King Harry, 1s., Sweet William, 1s., Eddy, 1s.	0	13	6	A very poor school-room girl	0	0	6
Young Friends at Pwyford	0	8	6	Collected by Edith Winter: Mary Cornish, 6d., Mary Freer, 6d., Florence Street, 6d., Leo, 6d.	0	2	0
John Adams, 37 Harrington Square	0	1	0	Gina	0	1	0
Annie Mary	0	5	6	"The Cheshire Cat," Leamington	0	5	0
S. H. and M., Isleworth	0	2	6	"A travelled Monkey"	0	2	6
F. M. C., Bristol	0	5	8	Katie, 10½d., Marion, 8d., Edith, 9½d.	0	2	4
Miss Ada Gurney	0	5	0	Effie, "Fee"	0	1	0
Lissy, 44 Cleveland Square	0	0	4	Toby, "Fee"	0	0	6
Carrie M. H.	0	5	0	Florence, Beatrice, Mabel, Lillian, Ernest, and Mamma, 23 Portland Place	0	3	6
A New Year's Gift from Polifield	0	5	0	Gertrude and Catherine	0	2	0
Miss M. E. Finnis, Dover (collected)	0	13	0	"Kate S., the late, her pocket-money"	0	5	6
"A Bunch of Roses," Jeaynes Court, Bisley	0	3	0	Bertie and Evan Fyers, Portsmouth	0	2	6
Ettie Stuart, Edinburgh	0	1	0	Miss F. H. Trower, 36 Gloucester Square, Hyde Park (collected)	2	0	0
P. H. S., Lower Clapton	1	18	0	Also two Nightingale cloaks, two boxes of toys, and four scrap-books.			
Hubert H. J. Wix, Tittlebury Vicarage	0	4	0	Pip, Teddy, Mab, and Gerty, Linton	0	3	0
Tiff and Kittens, Northamptonshire	0	1	0	"A tiny New Year's gift from Freda and Lyon Herbert," St. Andrew's, Scotland	0	5	0
The G. Family	0	8	1				
Kathleen, Courtney, Maude, Teddy, Cecil, Annette, and Henry	0	14	6				
Two "Bees"	0	2	0				
Jessie, Rosie, Emma, and Daisy Douglas, "Fees"	0	2	0				
Ditto (collected)	1	7	6				
Lily Manley, 3s., Papa, 1s., Mamma, 1s., West-hill, Sydenham	0	5	0				
Ada and Rosa Moss	0	1	6				
From Stoneleigh Lodge and Fernlee, Balham	0	2	6				
The Children of Gillwell Park, Essex	0	4	0				

	£	s.	d.
"From an empty Cot"	0	12	6
Nellie, 1s., Addie, 1s., Dolly, 1s., Mim, 5s.	0	8	0
Mrs. T. Dawson's Children, Poundsworth, Driffield	0	2	6
Lily and Janie Bailey, "Fees" . .	0	1	0
Floy	0	1	6
"Lazybones"	0	1	0
Donation, Uppingham	0	10	0
Apple-cheek, 6d., Charlie-my- dear, 6d., Merry-heart, 6d., Tweedle-dee, 6d., — 3d.	0	2	3
"The Highdown Sisters"	0	9	4
The Children at Rougham Rec- tory, Bury St. Edmunds	0	5	0
"A New Year's gift from Maude and Mildred" for Toby	0	1	0
Cuddie	0	1	0
F. Campbell, 2s. 6d., H. Camp- bell, 2s. 6d., A. Loveday, 2s. 6d., Ormsary, Argyle- shire	0	7	6
Margaret Ethel, Cedar Lodge, Muswell Hill	0	5	0
F. S. W., Dublin	0	1	0
Little Bessey, Fyvie Manse (for Toby)	0	2	6
Honey from little Bee's Hive, Brook Hill, Sheffield	0	4	0
Percival Young Knight, sav- ings from pocket-money	0	1	0
Four little Students, Summer Hill Grove	0	2	0
Oecil Wray, the Grove, Monas- tereven	0	10	0
Flo, Milnrow Vicarage	0	2	6
Two big and six little W's., omit- ted to be sent last year, 10s., ditto for January, 1872, 10s., school room fines, 3s. 6d., with a parcel of puzzles and toys	1	3	6
Santa Claus	0	0	4
Honeysuckle	0	2	6
Ada F. Fothergill (Fee)	0	0	6
Dolly, 1 Primrose Hill Road . .	0	1	0
Madeline Hill	0	0	5
Three Sisters at Leytonstone, Christmas pictures and de- corations for the Cot occupant. Anonymous, Southampton, Christmas cards. Laury Minchin, some home song-books and a scrap-book.			

A subscriber and admirer of the Aunt Judy's Magazine, twenty-seven Christmas cards.
Four Brighton Children, four scrap-books.
"Angelo's Christmas present to Aunt Judy's little patients," a little cloak.
Josephine, Ireland, twelve pairs of knitted cuffs, and sixty picture cards for distribution on her birthday, Jan. 6th.
M. A. B., some numbers of "Infant's Magazine."
The Children at Winchfield Vicarage, a box of articles for the Christmas-tree, and 6d. for the Cot patient.
The Misses and Master Baylia, Bowness Villa, a parcel of books and cards.
A. C. A. T., three pairs of woollen cuffs.
Vera Anna Taylor, two children's books for Annie H.—
Arthur and Sophy Elsie, Stutgard, a scrap-book.
H. C. N., a scrap-book.
A. L. B., two scrap-books.
Miss A. Bryden, Southsea, a patchwork quilt, with texts.
Dora, Herefordshire, picture-cards for Annie H.—
Mary Joanna Chawner, four Nightingale jackets, and a scrap-book.
Madeline Lucy Chinn, The Abnalls, Lichfield, a Nightingale jacket, and a scrap-book.
Susie Morris N., 2 Bedford Terrace, Plymouth, a scrap-book, &c.
Nelly and Bobby, Torquay, some numbers of the "Chatterbox," "Children's Prize," &c.
Two books for Annie, from a school-room in Devonshire.
Effie, a Christmas card.
Mrs. Thos. Dawson's Children, a scrap-book.
Gracie, Amy Edith, and Crigh-ton Nelson, a doll's house, with some toys and beads, also a Christmas cake.





THE MAGICIANS' GIFTS.

OLD-FASHIONED FAIRY TALES.

THE MAGICIANS' GIFTS.



HERE was once a king, in whose dominions lived no less than three magicians.

When the king's eldest son was christened, the king invited the three magicians to the christening feast, and to make the compliment the greater, he asked one of them to stand godfather. But the other two, who were not asked to be godfathers, were so angry at what they held to be a slight, that they only waited to see how they might best revenge themselves upon the infant prince.

When the moment came for presenting the christening gifts, the godfather magician advanced to the cradle and said, "My gift is this : Whatever he wishes for he shall have. And only I who give shall be able to recall this gift." For he perceived the jealousy of the other magicians, and knew that, if possible, they would undo what he did. But the second magician muttered in his beard, "And yet I will change it to a curse." And coming up to the cradle, he said, "The wishes that he has thus obtained he shall not be able to revoke or change."

Then the third magician grumbled beneath his black robe, "If he were very wise and prudent he might yet be happy. But I will secure his punishment." So he also drew near to the cradle, and said, "For my part, I give him a hasty temper."

After which, the two dissatisfied magicians withdrew together, saying, "Should we permit ourselves to be slighted for nothing?"

But the king and his courtiers were not at all disturbed.

"My son has only to be sure of what he wants," said the king, "and then, I suppose, he will not desire to recall his wishes."

And the courtiers added, "If a prince may not have a hasty temper, who may, we should like to know?"

And everybody laughed, except the godfather magician, who went out sighing and shaking his head, and was seen no more.

Whilst the king's son was yet a child, the gift of the godfather magician began to take effect. There was nothing so rare and precious that he could not obtain it, or so difficult that it could not be

accomplished by his mere wish. But, on the other hand, no matter how inconsiderately he spoke, or how often he changed his mind, what he had once wished must remain as he had wished it, in spite of himself; and as he often wished for things that were bad for him, and oftener still wished for a thing one day, and regretted it the next, his power was the source of quite as much pain as pleasure to him. Then his temper was so hot, that he was apt hastily to wish ill to those who offended him, and afterwards bitterly to regret the mischief that he could not undo. Thus, one after another, the king appointed his trustiest counsellors to the charge of his son, who, sooner or later, in the discharge of their duty, were sure to be obliged to thwart him; on which the impatient prince would cry, "I wish you were at the bottom of the sea with your rules and regulations;" and the counsellors disappeared accordingly, and returned no more.

When there was not a wise man left at court, and the king himself lived in daily dread of being the next victim, he said, "Only one thing remains to be done: to find the godfather magician, and persuade him to withdraw his gift."

So the king offered rewards, and sent out messengers in every direction, but the magician was not to be found. At last, one day he met a blind beggar, who said to him, "Three nights ago I dreamed that I went by the narrowest of seven roads to seek what you are looking for, and was successful."

When the king returned home, he asked his courtiers, "Where are there seven roads lying near to each other, some broad, and some narrow?" And one of them replied, "Twenty-one miles to the west of the palace is a four-cross road, where three field-paths also diverge."

To this place the king made his way, and taking the narrowest of the field-paths, went on and on till it led him straight into a cave, where an old woman sat over a fire.

"Does a magician live here?" asked the king.

"No one lives here but myself," said the old woman. "But as I am a wise woman I may be able to help you if you need it."

The king then told her of his perplexities, and how he was desirous of finding the magician, to persuade him to recall his gift.

"He could not recall the other gifts," said the wise woman. "Therefore it is better that the prince should be taught to use his power prudently and to control his temper. And since all the persons

capable of guiding him have disappeared, I will return with you and take charge of him myself. Over me he will have no power."

To this the king consented, and they returned together to the palace, where the wise woman became guardian to the prince, and she fulfilled her duties so well that he became much more discreet and self-controlled. Only at times his violent temper got the better of him, and led him to wish what he afterwards vainly regretted.

Thus all went well till the prince became a man, when though he had great affection for her, he felt ashamed of having an old woman for his counsellor, and said, "I certainly wish that I had a faithful and discreet adviser of my own age and sex."

On that very day a young nobleman offered himself as companion to the prince, and as he was a young man of great capacity, he was accepted: whereupon the old woman took her departure, and was never seen again.

The young nobleman performed his part as well as the wise woman herself, and the prince became deeply attached to him, and submitted in every way to his counsels. But at last a day came when, being in a rage, the advice of his friend irritated him, and he cried hastily, "Will you drive me mad with your long sermons? I wish you would hold your tongue for ever." On which the young nobleman became dumb, and so remained. For he was not, as the old woman had been, independent of the prince's power.

The prince's grief and remorse knew no bounds. "Am I not under a curse?" said he. "Truly I ought to be cast out from human society, and sent to live with wild beasts in a wilderness. I only bring evil upon those I love best—indeed, there is no hope for me unless I can find my godfather, and make him recall this fatal gift."

So the prince mounted his horse, and accompanied by his dumb friend, who still remained faithful to him, he set forth to find the magician. They took no followers, except the prince's dog, a noble bound, so quick of hearing that he understood all that was said to him, and was, next to the young nobleman, the wisest person at court.

"Mark well, my dog," said the prince to him, "we stay nowhere till we find my godfather, and when we find him we go no further. I rely on your sagacity to help us."

The dog licked the prince's hand, and then trotted so resolutely

down a certain road, that the two friends allowed him to lead them and followed close behind.

They travelled in this way to the edge of the king's dominions, only halting for needful rest and refreshment. At last the dog led them through a wood, and towards evening they found themselves in the depths of the forest, with no sign of any shelter for the night. Presently they heard a little bell, such as is rung for service, and the dog ran down a side path and led them straight to a kind of grotto, at the door of which stood an aged hermit.

"Does a magician live here?" asked the prince.

"No one lives here but myself," said the hermit. "But I am old, and have meditated much. My advice is at your service if you need it."

The prince then related his history, and how he was now seeking the magician godfather, to rid himself of his gift.

"And yet that will not cure your temper," said the hermit. "It were better that you employed yourself in learning to control that, and to use your power prudently."

"No, no," replied the prince; "I must find the magician."

And when the hermit pressed his advice, he cried, "Provoke me not, good father, or I may be base enough to wish you ill; and the evil I do I cannot undo."

And he departed, followed by his friend, and calling his dog. But the dog seated himself at the hermit's feet, and would not move. Again and again the prince called him, but he only whined and wagged his tail, and refused to move. Coaxing and scolding were both in vain, and when at last the prince tried to drag him off by force, the dog growled.

"Base brute!" cried the prince, flinging him from him in a transport of rage. "How have I been so deceived in you? I wish you were hanged!" And even as he spoke the dog vanished, and as the prince turned his head he saw the poor beast's body dangling from a tree above him. This sight overwhelmed him, and he began bitterly to lament his cruelty.

"Will no one hang me also," he cried, "and rid the world of such a monster?"

"It is casier to die repenting than to live amending," said the hermit; "yet is the latter course the better one. Wherefore abide

with me, my son, and learn in solitude those lessons of self-government without which no man is fit to rule others."

"It is impossible," said the prince. "These fits of passion are as a madness that comes upon me, and they are beyond cure. It only remains to find my godfather, that he may make me less baneful to others by taking away the power I abuse." And raising the body of the dog tenderly in his arms, he laid it before him on his horse, and rode away, the dumb nobleman following him.

They now entered the dominions of another king, and in due time arrived at the capital. The prince presented himself to the king, and asked if he had a magician in his kingdom.

"Not to my knowledge," replied the king. "But I have a remarkably wise daughter, and if you want counsel she may be able to help you."

The princess accordingly was sent for, and she was so beautiful, as well as witty, that the prince fell in love with her, and begged the king to give her to him to wife. The king, of course, was unable to refuse what the prince wished, and the wedding was celebrated without delay; and by the advice of his wife the prince placed the body of his faithful dog in a glass coffin, and kept it near him, that he might constantly be reminded of the evil results of giving way to his anger.

For a time all went well. At first the prince never said a harsh word to his wife; but by-and-by familiarity made him less careful, and one day she said something that offended him, and he fell into a violent rage. As he went storming up and down, the princess wrung her hands, and cried, "Ah, my dear husband, I beg you to be careful what you say to me. You say you loved your dog, and yet you know where he lies."

"I know that I wish you were with him, with your prating!" cried the prince, in a fury; and the words were scarcely out of his mouth when the princess vanished from his side, and when he ran to the glass coffin there she lay, pale and lifeless, with her head upon the body of the hound.

The prince was now beside himself with remorse and misery, and when the dumb nobleman made signs that they would pursue their search for the magician, he only cried, "Too late! too late!" But after a while he said, "I will return to the hermit, and pass the rest of my miserable life in solitude and penance. And you, dear friend, return to my father."

But the dumb nobleman shook his head, and could not be persuaded to leave the prince. Then they took the glass coffin on their shoulders, and on foot, and weeping as they went, they retraced their steps to the forest.

For some time the prince remained with the hermit, and submitted himself to his direction. Then the hermit bade him return to his father, and he obeyed.

Every day the prince stood by the glass coffin, and beat his breast and cried, "Behold, murderer, the fruits of anger!" And he tried hard to overcome the violence of his temper. When he lost heart the hermit would say, "Patience had a long way to go, but she was crowned at last." And after a while the prince became as gentle as he had before been violent. And the king and all the court rejoiced at the change; but the prince remained sad at heart, thinking of the princess.

One day he was sitting alone, when a man approached him, dressed in a long black robe.

"Good-day, godson," said he.

"Who calls me godson?" said the prince.

"The magician you have so long sought," said the godfather. "I have come to reclaim my gift."

"What cruelty led you to bestow it upon me?" asked the prince.

"The king, your father, would have been dissatisfied with any ordinary present from me," said the magician, "forgetting that the responsibilities of common gifts, and very limited power, are more than enough for most men to deal with. But I have not neglected you. I was the wise woman who brought you up. Again, I was the hermit, as your dog was sage enough to discover. I am come now to reclaim what has caused you such suffering."

"Alas!" cried the prince, "why is your kindness so tardy? If you have not forgotten me, why have you withheld this benefit till it is too late for my happiness? My friend is dumb, my wife is dead, my dog is hanged. When wishes cannot reach these, do you think it matters to me what I may command?"

"Softly, prince," said the magician; "I had a reason for the delay. But for these bitter lessons you would still be the slave of the violent temper which you have conquered. Moreover, when the spell which made all things bend to your wish is taken away, its effects also are undone. Godson! I recall my gift."

As the magician spoke the glass sides of the coffin melted into the air, and the princess sprang up, and threw herself into her husband's arms. The dog also rose, stretched himself, and wagged his tail. The dumb nobleman ran to tell the good news to the king, and all the counsellors came back in a long train from the bottom of the sea, and set about the affairs of state as if nothing had happened.

The old king welcomed his children with open arms, and they all lived happily to the end of their days.

WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY.

A WALK IN LEGHORN.



YOU know, I suppose, that Leghorn, or Livorno, which is its proper Italian name, is a great free-trading sea-port, and was once the commercial capital of Tuscany. Bradshaw will tell you that the harbour is, in consequence, generally full of vessels bearing the flags of every country on the habitable globe, and so forth; and the geography books will say, further, that on leaving Marseilles to go to Leghorn, you round a projecting bit of France, and get to Toulon, and that from Toulon you sail, or rather steam, almost in a straight line across the Gulf of Genoa. All this is very necessary to know, but it gives you no real idea about the place itself, so you must come into the town in fancy, and take the walk I did, and you will see something new and strange at every turn, and feel at once that you are in the streets of a foreign city.

Come with me, then, from our hotel across an unfinished street, past a dry dock where they are building an iron-clad, through the city gate, by a path bordered with slender, feathery trees, looking already green—they are tamarisks—to the fashionable promenade near the sea.

It is a broad, well-kept walk, divided from the sea by a low wall on one side, and having winding paths and trees and shrubs on the other. Very like an English sea-side esplanade, you will say. But the benches placed here and there are made of marble, and on one of these we will sit down and watch the lively crowd as it passes by.

The first thing that strikes us is the great number of dogs and soldiers. Almost every other person leads a dog by a string, and

more than half of the dogs' masters wear military uniforms. They never seem to dream of letting the poor doggies frisk about and enjoy themselves, but lead them solemnly along. And what odd-looking dogs they are! Look at that large pink poodle. He is so intelligent-looking that his face almost seems to protest against his own ugliness. He is shaved close from the tip of his tail, where a tuft has been left, to the tip of his nose, and again, down his legs to his ankles, which are adorned with a frill of hair, and look inexpressibly funny. Poor fellow! He sidles along with a half-ashamed, half-comical look, which seems to say, "I am not so bad as I look, after all. I've got something in me, though you might not think so, and nature did not make me so very bad-looking either; but if man *will* shave me, and take away all the nice grey hair which covered the dark patches in my otherwise fair skin, what is a poor poodle to do?"

An Italian lady in Pisa told me of a poodle who used to go and fetch a cab for her whenever she wanted one. In this case certainly the proverb "handsome is that handsome does" was particularly applicable.

There go some men of the famous Bersaglieri, or Rifle Regiment, short and active-looking, dressed in green, with an immense bunch of cock's feathers hanging from one side of their round, glazed hats. Here comes a chattering group of women and girls of the poorer sort. They are tall and slender, for the most part, and very upright, with long gowns, which trail in the dust, bright coloured or white silk handkerchiefs tied crosswise over their heads, so that the corner hangs down on their necks, and wooden shoes without heels, which make a constant click-clack, and look to the last degree uncomfortable and slatternly. See how curiously alike they are, with their large expressionless eyes, pale, worn faces, and large mouths. That girl looks half-starved, and yet she has a gaudy brooch in her bosom. It has most likely been taken out of the pawn-shop to display to-day, and will be taken back again to-morrow till the next holiday; for these poor women will almost starve themselves to keep possession of their family ornaments, or, in many cases, to buy them when they have none. The massive brooches and ear-rings look strangely out of place to an English eye, side by side with the dirty gowns and unkempt hair of the wearers.

There are two Bersaglieri officers smoking long, thin cigars; they

are dressed much like the men, but have ostrich feathers, dyed bright grass green, in their hats, instead of the much prettier cock's tails. Those smart ladies with the gay parti-coloured parasols, and hair frizzed up, wing-like, on the top of their foreheads, are most probably the wives and daughters of the shopkeepers here. They are a great contrast to the two men who follow them with handsome faces, long beards, and solemn, dark eyes. They are Armenians, and wear long black gowns and tall, square, black hats, like nothing we have seen before. More dogs, more soldiers, and more women and children, no one having apparently anything to do; and now we will leave the promenade and dive into the streets in search of the Jewish synagogue. Very dirty these streets are, and some of them have no trottoir, or side pavement, for walking. There are plenty of idle, dirty-looking people at every corner, and the great height of the houses, and the squalid look of everything, give one a very painful impression.

Here is the synagogue, which is said to be the finest in Europe. It is a large, lofty building, with handsome carved marble-work; round the tabernacle at one end, an inlaid reading desk of various coloured marbles, and a vaulted roof covered with gilded Hebrew characters. Two rows of galleries run round the upper part of the walls, one above the other, for the use of the women, who are not allowed to mix with the men during worship, but sit or kneel behind those gilded iron railings. Our conductor is an under-rabbi, and though, it is Saturday, and consequently the Jews' Sabbath, his family seem to have been let loose to play in the galleries. Shouts of laughter and joyous screams resound through the building, and we hear the pattering of many feet above us.

"Elena!" and a pretty, laughing girl's face peeps over the railing at us.

"Basta! Silenzio!" says the father. "Enough! Silence!" And there is silence for about a minute, when the noise bursts out again.

"Ah," says he, turning to us with a shrug and a smile, "they play, the poor children;" and he gives up the idea of making them quiet as a hopeless affair. The Jews can certainly have but little reverence for places, or perhaps the women's galleries are not looked upon as forming part of the sacred building.

We go back to luncheon through some broad, well-paved streets, and along the quay. There is a heavy shower, and we are much

amused at the cabmen, who all use umbrellas while driving. One of them, in particular, displays a bright red silk affair, much the worse for wear, and flattened into the shape of a gigantic pancake.

I found this, my first written sketch, fell rather flat, and determined for the future to *talk* about what I had seen. This was much more successful, and in fact the evening hour, which I had begun by dreading, grew quite pleasant and lively. I only hope other children may find my account of them equally so.

MONTE NERO.

In the afternoon we walked up the Monte Nero. This is a high hill outside Leghorn, where there is a monastery and a chapel which contains a famous image of the Virgin Mary. You know that the worship of the Virgin is a great feature of the Roman Catholic religion, and that there are very many images and pictures of her in all the churches. Well, this image on Monte Nero is thought to be peculiarly holy, and at one time to have had the power of working miracles; and the people of Leghorn think it a very good work to go up the steep hill to the chapel and pray there. One of the servants at the hotel, when she heard where I was going, said, earnestly, "Ah, signora, say one little prayer for me to the Holy Mother. I have not had time to go lately myself."

It was a very fine afternoon, soft and sunshiny, and we much enjoyed our rather steep climb up the hill. My pleasure, however, was rather spoilt by the beggars, who beset us at almost every step with most piteous prayers for charity. It was my first experience of Italian beggars, and I was not used to them as I afterwards became. Some of them looked very miserable, a good many were blind, as I thought, numbers were lame, and all in the veriest rags and tatters. But the children were exceptions. They looked well fed in spite of their begging, and most of them laughed, and seemed to look upon the thing as a good joke. One of our friends said to a tall girl who followed us, "It is a shame to beg." "No," said she, "it is a shame to steal, but not to beg," and held out her hand coaxingly. And this is what they are brought up to believe.

CHARLIE. Did they beg in Italian?

BLANCHE, with a laugh. Why, Charlie, *what* a question! Do you suppose a beggar in England wouldn't speak English?

"I make a rule!" cried I, looking at Charlie's red, little face and Blanche's self-satisfied one. "Every one is allowed to ask as many questions as he or she pleases, and no one is to laugh at the questions but myself. As for interruptions, I like them; only, of course, you will not ask a question till I have finished a sentence.

KITTY. Of course not; that would be bad manners.

"Yes, Charlie," I continued, "the beggars begged in good Italian, whereas a beggar in England would probably have begged in very bad English. In Tuscany the poor people speak better Italian, and much less *patois*, than in most other parts of Italy."

BLANCHE, hesitating. What is *patois*, Miss Hay?

"Question No. 2," said I, smiling, "and one which I expected. *Patois* is the badly pronounced, incorrect language and grammar spoken by uneducated people in all countries. We call it dialect in England, and in France it is called *patois*. For instance, if you were to go into Devonshire you would not understand all the people there said to you, and some words you would never have even heard before. In Yorkshire and Lancashire it would be worse, and you would almost fancy yourself in a foreign country. It is the same in France and in parts of Italy."

KITTY. I wonder why poor people talk badly.

CHARLIE. Because they don't know grammar.

MYSELF. Well, I don't know, Charlie. People don't think much about the grammar they have learnt when they are talking. They always hear *patois* spoken round them from the cradle, and of course they imitate it.

BLANCHE. Yes, I remember, Cousin Jack used to say such *very* odd things when he was quite little, and mamma said it was because he copied his nurse. He called a cockchafer a—a——

KITTY. A buzzard clock! How angry he got when we laughed at him!

MYSELF. I don't wonder; but I will go on now. I will tell you one other thing about the beggars. One of them, a well-known old man, who had sat for years on one of the bridges begging, was a money-lender.

ALL. A money-lender!

MYSELF. Yes. He kept a sort of bank for his poorer friends. He had made a fortune by begging, and found it so much pleasanter to sit idle in the sunshine than to work, that he went on with it, though

he was quite rich. Half-an-hour's good climb brought us to a paved square, three sides of which were built round with the convent and chapel of Monte Nero. Of monks there were none, for a law had been passed a short time before I went to Italy abolishing all the monasteries and convents; but we went into the chapel and saw the shrine of the Virgin, hung round with crutches, rags and wooden legs belonging to the sick people who had been cured, as they believed, by the intervention of the wonderful image. Round the wall were hung pictures of the different frightful accidents which had all been prevented or cured by her.

KITTY. Oh, Miss Hay, I saw something almost exactly like that at Holywell, when I went to Wales to stay with Uncle David.

MYSELF. Yes, the name Holywell shows that in old times the people thought the water to be holy, and to possess some miraculous power.

KITTY. Mamma said perhaps there was something in the water which really did cure the people, and it was so cold, I could hardly keep my hand in it.

MYSELF. That is very likely, Kitty. We very often laugh at people, and think them foolish and superstitious for believing such things; but it is usually that they do not believe enough, nor think that God has *all* the earth and the water in the hollow of His hand, and can cure His people by means of them when and where He sees fit. The poor people at Monte Nero, however, looked away from God, and only thought of the Virgin.

Another quarter-of-an-hour's walk brought us to the top of the hill, where we had a good view of Leghorn, and the country round towards Pisa, with a stretch of sea and a faint sight of Elba in the distance. The air was balmy and soft as we came down the hill, and the convent bell rang out the "Angelus," or hour for evening prayer, and made sweet music. We saw bare-headed women spinning with the old-fashioned distaff, of which you may have seen pictures, and very pretty children. One of these little ones had the most lovely cherub face I ever saw.

We drove home from the foot of the hill in an atmosphere which belonged to an English June, and that was the day I was thinking of when I told you the other evening that I was in a very different climate this time last year.

SPRING.



O more a child—though spring be come,
 And hedgerows bud again with leaves;
 And swallows from their winter home
 Are building in the sunny eaves.

No more a child—though days are long,
 And fields are green with springing corn;
 Though sweetly sounds the throstle's song
 Within the misty woods at morn.

No more a child—for you and I
 Have passed the narrow term of years,
 When joy could be a cloudless sky,
 And raindrops be the only tears;

When Ewden's stream a river seem'd,
 And tiny boats were ships to be,
 As fading out of sight we dream'd
 That they should reach the distant sea;

When faith was great, and love was pure,
 And credit held to tales of old,
 How goblins stalk'd the lonely moor,
 And rainbows brought a bag of gold.

No more as children shall we meet,
 No more as children shall we dream;
 The footprints of the little feet
 Are carried seaward by the stream.

Still when the golden spring returns,
 And wakes the echoes cherish'd most,
 And deep within the spirit yearns
 To touch the shadow it has lost,

It fills with love the throstle's song,
 It clothes with hope the springing grain—
 "Though parted *here*, if faith be strong,
 As children ye shall meet again!"

LL.B.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER IV.



WHAT a busy, bustling time it was that Monday afternoon at Dollington! How impossible it seemed ever to have done one's shopping!

Mrs. Dolby's toy-shop, always gay and always well-stocked, was resplendent at Christmas-time. There was a large room upstairs which was never open to the public except at that season, when a triumphal arch of artificial holly leaves was erected over the doorway, which seemed, to the youth of Dollington, a veritable entrance into Fairyland, and all the neighbourhood was invited to "Come, buy." And the best of Mrs. Dolby's fairyland was that everything in it was so marvellously cheap that, to enjoy it, you need not be an enchanted prince or princess, or even possess a fairy godmother; a few shillings would purchase more treasure than one little pair of arms could carry home.

The young Vernons had been half afraid that their aunt, coming from London, where all the shops surpassed, of course, even the wildest flights of rural imagination, might despise even Mrs. Dolby's Christmas Fair; but to their delight they found her quite ready to share their appreciation of its marvels.

So great was the variety of toys from which they had to choose, so complicated the money calculations it was necessary to make, that it was quite dark before they had bought half the necessary number of presents.

Then, while Mr. Mildmay and the boys superintended (or hindered) the packing of the goods, and made arrangements for their being sent up to the school-house, Fanny Arnott and Maud hurried across the street to the linendraper's to buy materials with which to dress the dolls. While they were hesitating between pinks and blues and tartans and muslins, Harry came in to tell them that just as Mrs. Dolby had packed up all the things, it had struck Mr. Mildmay that the dolls ought to go home to be dressed. "Should they be taken out of the parcel now, or would it do if Cousin Frank sent them over to the Hall to-morrow?"

"Better to take them home with us," said Aunt Fanny; "we shall not have too much time for dressing them, and we ought to begin this evening, or to-morrow morning at latest."

So the parcel was unpacked, the dolls taken out, and the parcel re-



packed, amid many "Well, I'm sures!" from Mrs. Dolby, and unfeeling laughter from Jack when one poor doll broke her leg in the process of extrication from the jaws of a very savage looking lion, who opened his mouth with a horrid grin by means of some ingenious mechanism.

At last they thought all was settled.

Had Mr. Mildmay ordered the buns?"

"Yes."

"Had Harry given the message to the carpenter about the tables and benches?"

"Yes, yes."

"Had Jack got the sugarplums?"

"No, he had forgotten them. Should he go for them now?"

"Oh no, not now. Another day will do. Let us go home," said Aunt Fanny, and they picked up their parcels and started homeward. But they were hardly out of the town when Harry remembered the skates he had singled out as just the pair for Aunt Fanny, and nothing would satisfy him but to be allowed to go back and secure them. Nobody need be hindered, for he would go alone and catch them up in no time.

"But unless I come and try them on, how are you to know that they will fit me?" said Fanny.

"True; then you and I will go back, and the others can go on."

But the others thought they would come too, so all the party turned back. Happily, the skates fitted perfectly, and as nobody remembered anything else (Cousin Frank had threatened to fine anybody who did), they got home at last only ten minutes late for tea.

The usual plan for the evening meal at Everton Hall was that Mrs. Vernon should dine by herself, sometimes in the library, but more often in her own sitting-room, while the children had tea in the schoolroom. On the three evenings that had passed since her arrival Fanny Arnott had dined with her sister, always wishing they might join the tea-party in the schoolroom; but to-day, when, in prospect of Mr. Mildmay's coming, dinner for three had been ordered in the library, she had boldly proposed that, instead of the old folks dining by themselves and the young folks having tea by themselves, a compromise should be made, and they should all have a jolly stiff tea together in the library; the children had eagerly seconded her, and Mrs. Vernon had willingly consented, for, with Fanny to support her, she did not feel any fear of being overpowered by her children's mirth.

The library at Everton was, by universal consent, the pleasantest room in the house, and ever since Colonel Vernon's death it had taken the place of the dining-room, which had quite fallen into disuse, except

for romping or battledore and shuttlecock on a rainy afternoon. For the dining-room was so large and lofty that it took a dozen lamps to drive away the shadows that lurked in its four corners; the marble statues that stood along the walls had a ghostly look, and the servants' footsteps falling on the polished floor echoed back unpleasantly from the panelled walls and vaulted ceiling; altogether, one must have spirits quite exceptionally boisterous to withstand the depressing influences of the room. But the library was the very reverse of all this. There was an air of comfort about everything in it; about the heavy blue curtains, the well-filled bookshelves, the soft Turkey carpet, with its infinite variety of tints blended into a perfect harmony, and, above all, about the spacious fireplace, with its blazing logs and hissing knobs of coal. It was, in fact, the very room for a snug tea-party, and so all our friends agreed when they gathered round the tea-table, eager to tell, and eager to hear, the adventures of the afternoon. Much fun they all made of the visit to Dollington; they laughed at Frank Mildmay's extravagant ideas about buns and tea, at Fanny Arnott's arithmetical blunders in the toy-shop, at Mrs. Dolby's consternation when called upon to unpack again the parcel she had just packed up, at the things they had bought and the things they had not bought, at everybody and everything, and, at last—as Jack confessed, when called upon to say what on earth he was laughing at now—at nothing at all. The library at Everton was certainly a pleasant room, and not the least pleasant thing in it that evening was the happy smile on Mrs. Vernon's face as she joined in the merriment of her children, and felt, almost for the first time since her husband's death, that it was not too much for her.

When they adjourned to the drawing-room Maud was anxious to begin at once to dress the three dozen dolls they had brought home, but Aunt Fanny said she was lazy, and did not intend to do a stitch of work till to-morrow, a determination that was highly approved by the boys.

"Let us play at something," said Jack.

"By all means," said Fanny; "what shall it be?"

But nobody had anything to suggest, so Aunt Fanny asked them if they had ever played at the Story-game. They did not know it, but should like nothing better than to learn it. Fanny assured them that it was easily learnt.

"If you will all provide yourselves with pencils and paper, and then sit round the table, I will soon make you understand all about it. Clara, you will play, won't you?"

Mrs. Vernon began to make excuses, but her sister said they would be too few without her, and she yielded; so they all drew their chairs up to the table, fumbled in their pockets for pencils, and for knives to cut the pencils with, and announced themselves ready to be taught—all but Mabel, who had found a delightful pastime for herself in extemporizing a story of a fearful shipwreck that had thrown the three dozen new dolls helpless and naked on the hospitable shores of the drawing-room sofa. To rescue them from the waves, which were represented by the sofa cushions and anti-macassars, and to make up beds for them in the drawers of the writing-table, was an occupation after her own heart; and it was the funniest thing in the world to see the gravity with which she went through her drama. Every now and then she ran up to the table to tell the details of some peculiarly distressing case of destitution, and to plead earnestly for help for the sufferers; and when Cousin Frank put his hand into his pocket and produced a new shilling for her, she ran over with such delight all the useful garments it would purchase for the shipwrecked folk, that nobody could help laughing; upon which she drew herself up, and said severely, "It is very unfeeling of you to laugh at other people's misfortunes. But you are all selfish—except Cousin Frank" (as she remembered the new shilling), "and I won't speak to you any more, not to any of you, except Cousin Frank;" which awful threat was not long kept.

"First of all," said Fanny, "you must each write a word on this slip of paper."

"Any word?"

"Any noun or adjective you like. Oh! but you must double it down before passing the paper on. There, that is right. You see no one must know what the others have written, in order that the words may have as little to do with one another as possible."

As the party was rather small for the game, Mabel was called upon to contribute a word; she thought for some minutes, then, with a roguish smile, she nestled up to Aunt Fanny and whispered, "I know one—Blue Dragon." So Aunt Fanny wrote down Blue Dragon, and Mabel ran back to the dolls.

"Now we must each write a rule in the same way that we have written our words; any rule, you know, that you like to make. They will not be read out till the stories are written, and then any one who has broken a rule will have to pay a forfeit."

"That's the most unfair arrangement I ever heard of," said Frank Mildmay; "to be made to pay a forfeit for breaking rules that one hasn't a chance of knowing."

"Very hard, but you must submit."

The rules were written and the words read out; these were *Comedy*, *Steam-engine*, *Blue Dragon*, *Farthing*, *Match-box*, *International*, and *Absurd*. Then began the serious business of writing stories in which these seven words were to be introduced in the order in which they had been written down. Mrs. Vernon and her sister set off at once and scribbled away with most provoking ease; Cousin Frank rocked his chair and looked up at the ceiling for five minutes, then wrote for two, and announcing that his story was finished, folded his paper and tossed it into the plate; Maud wrote three stories, tore them up, and said she was in despair, and wrote a fourth, which she said *must* do. Harry cut his pencil till there was none of it left, and then borrowed Cousin Frank's, and began writing at a furious pace, but soon stopped, and declared that he could not manage to do anything at all, unless they would let him write a letter. Permission was given, and he wrote his letter without more loss of time; while Jack, to the surprise of his brother and sisters, made very short work of it indeed. At last all the stories were finished, and, after a little discussion, Frank Mildmay was appointed reader, and Fanny Arnott judge.

"My first duty as judge," said Fanny, "is to proclaim the rules." So she put on her spectacles, and with them a very judicial expression of countenance, and, after a little dry cough, began in a solemn voice—

"Ladies and gentlemen, it is my duty to inform you that any one who shall be found guilty of having begun his or her story with the hackneyed phrase, 'Once upon a time,' will be, in accordance with rule I., condemned to pay a forfeit."

Maud looked uneasy. "Holloa, Maud," chuckled Harry, "I thought I should catch you there." The judge called him to order, and forbade any further remarks. Silence being restored, Fanny continued:

"By rule II. it is forbidden to fill more than two pages of note-

paper; by rule III. it is forbidden to write in verse; by rule IV. the name of Angelina is tabooed; by rule V. personal allusions are forbidden; and, finally, rule VI. enacts that the intelligent reader shall not be insulted by 'sentimental bosh.'"

"Now for the stories!" cried Jack.

"I must detain you a few minutes longer," said the judge. "Besides the rules I have read, there is a standing rule of the game that forbids people claiming their stories till the forfeits are to be paid. Now, Mr. Mildmay, will you do your part?"

Mr. Mildmay picked up a paper at haphazard, unfolded it, and, after a few not very complimentary remarks on the handwriting, read—

"A NIGHT AT THE PLAY.

"The last time I went to the play, it was to see a new *comedy* in five acts, of which I cannot now even recall the name; but as I fell asleep five minutes after the curtain rose, and I did not wake again till the play was over, the lights out, and the house empty, that is not much to be wondered at. It is rather an odd feeling, by-the-way, that comes over one when one wakes up at two o'clock in the morning in an empty playhouse, with all the lights out. When I made this remark the next day to my friend Jones, the American engineer, he 'guessed I felt like a *steam-engine* off the line.' I answered, 'Just so;' and we turned into the *Blue Dragon*, and had a drink. But this is neither here nor there. I woke up, I said, to find myself in utter darkness. Of course, the first thing I did was to collect my thoughts; the next, to feel whether my pocket had been picked. As I did not know what I had in it when I came into the theatre, I could not make up my mind on that point; however, I ascertained that it contained at that moment a pocket-handkerchief, a small coin that might be either half a sovereign, a brass *farthing*, or a sixpenny piece, and an empty *match-box*. Very satisfactory, but what was to be done next? Before I could answer this question I had fallen asleep again, and was dreaming that I was lost at the *International Exhibition*. From this second nap I was awakened by a rough push from a shabby-looking man, who seemed to be a sort of housemaid to the establishment, and who was desirous of knowing 'what I was up to?' I opened my eyes, looked sleepily round, ejaculated 'How very *absurd*!' and strolled out into the street."

As Mr. Mildmay finished reading, there arose a buzz of approbation, and everybody began to speculate upon the authorship. But Fanny pointed out that to wonder who had written a story was equal to saying that one had not written it oneself, and that if this was done with every story, by the time all the papers had been read, it would be known to whom each belonged, which would make it very difficult for her to discharge her judicial duties with impartiality. The other five stories were accordingly listened to in a most decorous silence, broken only by an occasional laugh or short criticism, such as "Good;" or "Not bad at all."

I give the papers in the order in which Mr. Mildmay read them.

"A SCHOOLBOY'S LETTER.

"From Dick Graham to his sister Mary, who is finishing her education at Miss Grimshaw's seminary for young ladies.

"MY DEAR POLLY,

"You want me to tell you what I am doing in London. Well, here goes.—Last night I went to the play, and saw the '*Comedy of Errors*.' It was awfully jolly. There was an old fellow in the orchestra who puffed away at a trumpet sort of dodge, like a *steam-engine*, or a house on fire. I wish you had been there; you'd like it better, I expect, than grinding away with the *Blue Dragon*. (A note explained that the Blue Dragon was a name given to Miss Grimshaw on account of her extraordinary learning and the severity of her character.) I have spent all my money, down to the last *farthing*, which I gave to a little girl who sells good-for-nothing *match-boxes* at the corner of the street.

"To-morrow I am going to the *International Exhibition*, and the next day back to school, which is *absurd*, as they say in Euclid. Now good-bye.

"From your affectionate brother,

"DICK."

"A VISIT TO THE THEATRE.

"Once upon a time, Tom and Lucy were taken by their uncle to the play. The first piece they saw was a very amusing *comedy*, in which a man invented a *steam-engine* that wouldn't work; and after that came a pantomime, in which a whole army of dwarfs were eaten up by a *blue dragon*. What Lucy liked best was the fairies and the

beautiful scenery; but Tom said he didn't care a *farthing* for any of it except the harlequinade, in which all sorts of ridiculous things were said and done. A wedding party drove to church in a gigantic *match-box* on wheels, half a dozen people were lost in a maze that was called the *International Exhibition*, and the clown made more *absurd* jokes than any one could be expected to remember.

"On the whole, Tom and Lucy had a very pleasant evening, and talked of nothing but the play for a long time to come."

"TRAGEDY OR COMEDY?"

"'Well-a-day!' said old Mrs. Bottleton, 'if that ain't a reg'lar *comedy*.' 'A comedy, do you call it? I should be more inclined to say it was a tragedy.' 'Well, well, have it your own way; tragedy or comedy—don't see much difference. For my part, when a poor fellow gets caught up in a *steam-engine*, I call it reg'lar awful; a flying in the face of Providence, that's what I calls it.' Mrs. Bottleton was the landlady of the *Blue Dragon*, and the kindest-hearted woman that ever breathed, but in moments of emotion she was apt to call things by wrong names, a proceeding she would justify by saying that 'So long as you knows what folks mean, you need not care a brass *farthing* what they say.'

"What had upset her feelings and confused her vocabulary on this particular morning was a paragraph in her favourite newspaper, the *Match-box* (so called by reason of the striking character of the information it contained), which told how a countryman taking his pleasure at the *International Exhibition*, having ventured too near to a steam-engine at work, had been caught in the wheels, and had narrowly escaped with his life. Now, Mrs. Bottleton had '*absurd*' (by which I imagine she meant, observed) when she was at the *Hinternational* herself that 'there wern't sufficient precautions taken against such-like cazzalties;' and, what is more, Mrs. Bottleton had thought twice whether she would not 'tell them of it.'"

"HOW AUGUSTUS BECAME FAMOUS."

"'I will be famous!' said Augustus. 'I will write a *comedy* that shall astonish the world—yes, and I will begin to-night.—Authors never sleep; they burn the midnight oil: so will I.' This vow was made in

the year 1800, before the invention of *steam-engines*, when therefore people still travelled by coach. The scene was the best bedroom of the *Blue Dragon* inn. Augustus was on his way to London, and the immediate cause of his thirst for fame was his having travelled all day in company with a painter and a poet who had discoursed to one another so pleasantly on the fame they were about to achieve that Augustus would have died of envy had it not occurred to him that he, too, might emerge from obscurity.

"He would burn the midnight oil, and write a play. But first he must compose one. This would be best done in the dark, or by such feeble light as the *farthing* rushlight on his mantelshef emitted. He blew out the candles, and paced his room. The comedy did not advance. There might be inspiration in the night air—he would open the window. He did so, and the wind blew out the rushlight, leaving him in total darkness. This was awkward, especially as it had just occurred to him that inspiration probably came through pen and paper, and however easy it might be to compose in the dark, it certainly was not possible to write without some light. But how should he procure a light? Naturally of a shy disposition, he shrank from rousing the household; and, as matches and *match-boxes* were as little known in those days as railways and telegraphs, he had no means of striking one in his own room. It was clearly necessary to give up fame, and go to bed, and, between ourselves, he was not altogether sorry to do so.

"When the boots called him the next morning, he asked at what time the '*International*' started. 'Bless you, sir, it's been gone these two hours. You should have mentioned it overnight, if as how you'd any thoughts of going by it,' and the boots grinned unpleasantly. Augustus muttered, '*absurd*,' and went to sleep again.

"So he became famous after all—famous for missing the coach, and taking it 'uncommon cool.'"

"A SPELLING LESSON.

"Willy Smith sat in a corner like little Jack Horner, but he was not doing anything half so pleasant as eating a Christmas pie. He was learning his spelling lesson, and the words his governess had set him were—*comedy*, *steam-engine*, *blue dragon*, *farthing*, *match-box*, and *international*. And if any one says that this is not a fair way of

bringing in the words, I can only say that it is *absurd* to expect a fellow to do it in any other way."

There was a general laugh at the ingenious way in which the difficulty of introducing the words had been got over in the last story.

Without allowing the party to enter into any discussion as to what paper came from what pen, the judge rose from her chair, and said :

"It is my painful duty to have to exact forfeits from the authors of 'How Augustus became famous,' of a 'Schoolboy's Letter,' and of 'A visit to the Theatre.' The author of 'How Augustus became famous' has unwittingly broken rule II., by which it is enacted that no story shall occupy more than two pages of note-paper." (Everybody seemed sorry). "I share the general regret that it should be necessary to pass sentence in this case; and, I believe, I shall only be expressing the feeling of the company when I say that we should gladly have listened to twice the number of pages from the same pen." (General applause). "The author of 'A visit to the Theatre' has fallen into the error of using the hackneyed phrase, 'once upon a time;' a phrase that is, moreover, forbidden by rule I. I hope that the severe sentence, it is my duty to pass, will be a lesson to the author, and that at the end of the brilliant literary career of which this paper gives promise, he or she will be able to reflect that it was only *once* upon a time that a commonplace expression was allowed to mar otherwise irreproachable literary work. The offence of which the author of 'A Schoolboy's Letter' has been guilty is of a very different nature. Personal allusions are forbidden by rule V., and also by all the laws of good society. It is, therefore, with extreme pain that I inform the company that the offensive nickname, *Blue Dragon*, is pointed at an amiable lady now in the room. It would cause her unnecessary pain were I to name her; I will not do so, but will content myself with saying that all who have the pleasure of her acquaintance agree with me that she is as much too amiable to deserve the name of *Dragon* as she is too ignorant to be fitly called *blue*." ("Well done, Aunt Fanny!") "I will only add that, were it in my power, I would gladly exact two forfeits instead of one from the person who has been guilty of this grave offence, and that it is only owing to the imperfect state of our law that base insinuation meets with no severer punishment than that

awarded to the comparatively venial faults of lengthiness and commonplaceness. Authors of 'How Augustus became famous,' of 'A Schoolboy's Letter,' and of 'A visit to the Theatre,' make yourselves known, and pay your forfeits!"

Then Mrs. Vernon, and Maude, and Harry, who had been looking terribly guilty during the judge's speech, stood up, amid cries of "I knew it was mamma—or Harry—or Maud!" for everybody had been very acute, and had known at once who had written what.

When the forfeits had been paid, Fanny, blindfolded like Justice herself, decided how they were to be redeemed. I am afraid there must have been some secret understanding between her and Mr. Mildmay, for the punishments fell with singular appropriateness. The owner of "that very pretty thing," Mrs. Vernon's diamond ring, which, though it gleamed very brightly, could hardly have been visible through a dozen folds of Indian silk, was condemned to sit in an arm-chair with closed eyes, and be kissed successively by his or her three nearest relations present, till he or she had said without mistake which was which. The owner of Harry's pocket-knife was to turn three somersaults, or write another story; and the owner of the silver thimble was to "sing a song o' sixpence." But after all, when one witnessed the surprise of the judge, on discovering how suitable the punishments were, it was difficult to believe there had been foul play.

Mrs. Vernon sat in her chair, and was kissed by her three children; Maud sung: "Jolly, jolly sixpence; I've got sixpence; I love sixpence better than my life;" and Harry turned three splendid somersaults, for he showed no inclination to go through the agonies of literary composition a second time, and then Mrs. Vernon pointed to the clock. Half-past ten!

"I must be going," said Frank.

"And you must be going to bed," said Mrs. Vernon to her children.

"Good-night, good-night; be off at once."

"Not yet," pleaded Jack, and "not yet," echoed Maud and Harry. But Mrs. Vernon was inexorable.

"Before I go to bed," said Harry, "I want to know who wrote 'Tragedy or Comedy?' Tell me who?"

"Don't you know?" said Maud; "I do."

"I expect Cousin Frank did."

"No, he didn't," and Maud looked very wise; "Cousin Frank wrote

‘A night at the Play.’ I know that, because when he opened it he said it was the crabbedest hand he had ever seen, and then he read it straight off without any difficulty.”

“Very good reasoning, Maud,” said Cousin Frank; “you will be a professor of logic one of these days.”

“All very fine,” said Harry; “but the question was, who wrote ‘Tragedy or Comedy?’ You have not answered that, after all.”

“Well, if Cousin Frank did not write it, there is only one other person who can have done so, and that’s Aunt Fanny.”

“Oh yes, of course; we know about all the others. Well, good-night.”

“Good-night.”

“Don’t burn the midnight oil.”

“Not I!”


And the children went to bed, and dreamt of blue dragons, and steam-engines, and all the wonders of Mrs. Dolby’s shop.

(To be continued.)

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.

Y DEAR TOBY,

In the last letter I sent I left the story of the bald-headed coot unfinished. There is not much more to say about it. We never succeeded in getting that bird, and so I was never able to put Melchior’s assertion as to its species to the test. From later experience, however, on the banks of the moat, I cannot help fancying that it can only have been a common water-hen, for I have seen many of the latter birds there, but never a bald-headed coot. I now jump to another entry in my old diary.

Feb. 1st. “*Melchior’s new gun came. Hard frost. Went after the ducks.*”

“Please the carrier’s brought the things, and there’s a parcel, as he says is a gun, in a bag like, as I didn’t like to touch for fear it be a loaded, and it’s directed to Mr. Melchior.”

Such was the welcome message brought to us, as we sat, on the

evening of the last of January, plotting a grand expedition after the wild duck for the next night.

There was a hard frost. Coming up from the ice in the afternoon, Melchior and I heard a "call" high above us, which could be nothing else than wild duck flying over towards the west. I say towards the west, because we had noticed that when these birds did come, they always seemed to come from east to west, and the geese that flew over the church were flying from east to west; in fact as soon as a frost came there seemed to be a migration from east to west. The theory which the facts supported, and we adopted, was, that the cold attacked the eastern and north-eastern shores of England first, and the birds seemed to know that they had more chance of getting their food on the unfrozen shores of the west, where the Gulf Stream still kept the ice away. At any rate, we always expected the ducks when a frost came. And the frost had come at last, in earnest. During the past week the winds had brought icebergs from the northern seas to the mouth of the Humber, and in consequence (so the papers said) the country had been invaded by cold cutting winds. But now the wind had fallen, and there was a regular ground frost. Now Melchior and I had been waiting for the ducks all through the winter. A friend in Lincolnshire had lent us a decoy duck; that is to say, a hamper had arrived, containing a little white duck trained to keep quacking all night and day too. Well, on the morning of the first of February we took this bird down to the dam, and set her afloat in the only piece of water left free from ice, where the Mermaid's Ford emptied itself into the sheet of water, and the stream was too strong to allow itself to be frozen over. A clipped wing prevented our decoy from flying away, and there she sat on the top of the stream, nibbling among the reeds by the side. Having thus set our trap we spent the afternoon in skating, now on the moat, and then, after a scramble up the bank which separated them, on the dam. The frost was most severe; every tree about the moat was frozen white; every branch sparkled as if it was made of loaf-sugar. The villager's beards and whiskers were white as any miller's, for the frost petrified their very breath as it left their lips. It was marvellous that the words we addressed to each other ever reached our ears, for it seemed as though they ought to have been frozen stiff before they got so far. In short, everything sparkled so with the frost crystals that the old moat,

overhung by the oak trees, now no longer dark and sombre, and the figures gliding about the ice below, made up a sort of transformation scene for a Christmas pantomime, which one would hardly imagine could have ever really existed.

Melchior and I prepared ourselves for the campaign. His new gun had arrived, a birthday present from his indulgent papa; a real double-barrelled gun it was. I in my innocence had transferred to him a nice japanned tin box, which my aunt had given me to keep my collection of coins in, while he in return had transferred his single-barrelled gun to me. "In my innocence," I said, because I did not then know that he had previously obtained a small microscope from another brother, giving the same old gun in exchange, so that I never felt myself master of the gun until I had transferred something else to my second brother for his share in it. Well, we made our preparations, which consisted chiefly of thick stockings and boots and thick coats, and a rug on which to lie when waiting for the ducks. Melchior took charge of the dry peat, and I pocketed the matches. The peat was to be lighted, Melchior said, to prevent the ducks from scenting us. A little smuggled brandy in a flask, to keep us warm, completed our equipment, and we sallied forth. The sun was fast disappearing and the sky beginning to look darker and darker, when we started after the ducks. It was one of those afternoons in the middle of a hard frost when silence seems to pervade everything. The almost deathly stillness was only broken by the occasional rumbling of distant wheels upon the country road, now hard as iron. The ice was deserted; as we trudged down the orchard the long grass crackled under our heavy boots, and our lips were stiffening in the cold. Past the moat and along the bank of the dam we crept, almost on all fours, making as little noise as possible. Every little stick seemed to crackle as I stepped, and the hard lumps of clay on the bank would trip me up.

"Make less noise, young 'un," was the reproof I got; "lift your feet higher, and put them down firmly, but not with a bang."

At last we approached our destination, the mouth of the Mermaid's Ford. We could hear every ripple as the stream tumbled among the old willow-tree roots, and the icicles rattled on the dead flags, which still stood up in the water, till we could almost imagine ourselves among the ghosts and rattling bones and clanking irons of the Christmas stories. Lower and lower we stooped, crouching in the

ditch of the fallow field, which ran down to the bank. At last Melchior who was leading, stopped.

"Matches, young 'un." Two small lumps of peat earth were drawn from his pocket and lighted. "Put it between your teeth, and blow when it seems to be going out," he whispered, "and be ready to hand me my gun."

On that, he crept on all fours, and most cautiously put his head just above the level of the bank. Our decoy was quacking, and we could hear her lapping among the reeds at the side. "Nothing yet," Melchior whispered. "Come up the stream."

Adopting the old stalking tactics once more, we crept noiselessly for about a hundred yards up the side of the stream, and then got over the wall into a pasture field, through which the brook ran. Now in the middle of this field were two pits, which had been disused for some years, but were formerly employed in the process of tanning hides to leather. At the time I speak of they were merely stagnant pools, with not much water in them, which were almost choked with rushes and water plants.

Our scheme was to hide ourselves as much as possible, crouching under one of the willow bushes by the stream, and to call the ducks which we hoped would be passing above us. They could not refuse the tan-pits, if they escaped the allurements of our siren decoy lower down the stream. Surely with every pond round about frozen hard, they would come to the open water of the brook, and the rushes in the pits for their night's bivouac. So we thought, and we were not disappointed. Hardly had we stationed ourselves in position when from far above our heads the expected "quack" came upon our ears. "Quack," Melchior responded, imitating as well as he could, somewhere down in his throat. "Quack" I added. "Quack," nearer, but still just above our heads, nearer again, this time a little more in front of us, then just behind us again. The birds were circling round our heads preparatory to descending to the water. Then through the twilight we caught a glimpse of them, three great birds, looking three times their real size, and to our excited imagination quite as formidable as the Roc whose egg Sinbad the Sailor discovered so inopportunately. "When next they come in front, fire," whispered Melchior. He had hardly spoken, when with a defiant quack the trio swooped close in front of us. My gun went off, though I hardly was aware I had pulled

the trigger. Melchior fired too, and the next thing I remembered was hearing a squeaking on the ground in front of us, and seeing Melchior dash forward and wring the neck of the bird which one of us had winged.

We had positively brought to the ground a fine plump drake!

"Now what shall we do?" I asked. "Go back to the decoy and wait?"

"No, there is no use in doing that; we shall probably only disturb any which may be coming over. They will have all 'put up' for the night before long, so every minute now is valuable, and ought to be left to them entirely. We'll go home now, and come out again before daylight, and catch them before they start again, that is to say if any settle here in the meantime."

Accordingly we turned about, and got into the road which ran on the other side of the field, and walked home in triumph without disturbing the decoy.

Now, Toby, you must understand, please, that in sending you these notes from my old boyish diary I do not pretend to give you a full 'scientific account of fieldfares, or ducks, or anything else, nor of all the various modes of getting at game, and such things. All that is to be found in the books. But the books do not always tell you how to find game in a country where there is none, nor how to get trout out of a stream when no one else can. It is easy enough to write a cookery-book (and some such have been written) in which it is presumed that the person who uses it has every patent stove and saucepan, and every material for the dishes ready at hand. But it is not at all easy to come across a cookery-book which will make you a French cook at once, clever enough to make a palatable dish out of an old boot. And so, when you want to know how to beat a plantation with so many guns and so many beaters, and so many tame pheasants in the bushes, you must look at the books. My object in sending you these jottings is to show you that some fun is to be got in the most unlikely places by the most unusual means. For instance no one would have dreamt of duck-shooting on the dam at home. It was not a country for wild-fowl, nor was the locality adapted for it. There was a mill always booming at one end of the water, and during the frost the village turned out bodily on the ice. Little chance, anyone would say, of getting a wild duck there. Much too public a place.

But a little observation had shown us that during a frost wild duck were crossing above in the air, and that it only needed the presence of water, especially unfrozen water, to tempt the rovers to stay the night. Moreover, the publicity and noise were over before we went after the birds; we knew they only came just at dusk, and went away in the dusk of the next morning. This was enough, and while our grand friends laughed at anything less than a river and miles of marshy ground for their wild-duck shooting, we just managed to get a taste so to speak, out of our very slender materials, and learnt what the look and flight of a wild duck is.

Apropos of, and in contrast with our somewhat tame taste of wild fowl, I am going to jump on to the next summer, when I was staying with a schoolfellow in Essex. At some other time I may tell you how we ran down the river in a little yacht he had to Burnham, and dredged for soles and other salt-water fish on the way there, and spent a night wandering in the Essex marshes; but now I will just try to recollect what I can of something we saw when we did get to Burnham. We drove over from Southminster to see "a decoy" for wild duck and other waterfowl. And certainly it was a curious sight. About a mile and a half inland from the sea was a small fresh-water pond, artificially cut into the shape of a starfish, that is to say, there were eight or ten channels cut tapering off to a point, just like the rays of a starfish. In fact, imagine yourself in a balloon, looking down upon the pond, and you would see a large starfish of water in the flat field. Well, each of these creeks faced a different wind, and down both sides of each creek were erected hurdles, seven or eight feet high, made of long rushes. But these hurdles were placed in a curious manner overlapping each other, so that while a man outside the hurdles could see the water anyone in the water could not see him. Then over the water was stretched a net on arches of wooden frame-work. So that each creek, or ray of the starfish pond was, as it were, a tunnel with water at the bottom, net at the top, and osier hurdles at the sides. This was the pond. Then of course there were the trained decoy ducks, who quacked in the middle of the pond where the water was open. Now imagine a lot of water-fowl, flying from the shore inland to feed, hearing the decoy below, and settling down in the middle of the pond. Watch that little squat man, who waddles like a duck himself. See he has got


something smoking in his mouth. It is not a pipe but a lump of peat. He has got a little fox-coloured dog with him, which keeps jumping in and out among the hurdles, first by the water and then outside the hurdle. The little man creeps on along the hurdles, and keeps throwing something over the top into the water. That is corn. He is feeding the wild ducks; the decoys are leading them slowly but surely into the trap. They see the fox-coloured dog. They pursue him; all birds hate anything fox-coloured, and will fly at it. The dog is trained, and leads them dancing on to their destruction at the taper end of the creek and the net. The net gets closer and closer to the water and the creek narrows, but the ducks are so busy feeding they do not notice anything. Suddenly the little man jumps inside the hurdles, and shows himself between the ducks and the open water from which they have been lured. What a scuffle and scurry there is! Up they rise, but meet the net and drop again. The little man shouts and gesticulates; they cannot get past him. They struggle forward in a mass to the end of the net. Is it necessary to add that the net ends in a bag?—that having driven them in in a living mass the aperture is closed, and the little man walks leisurely round to pull them out one by one, wring their necks, and send them by dozens by the morning train to the London markets? This is the inevitable and melancholy end, which I dare say, Toby, you guessed. But perhaps you will not have guessed that the wary decoy birds are so well trained that they *never get included in the bag-net, but invariably escape, and swim leisurely back.*

Next month, Toby, you must make some flies for your trout-fishing season. So if you happen to get at a water-hen or a wild duck, save the wings of both birds, for the feathers will be useful to you.

Your affectionate Uncle, &c.



A FOSSIL HUNT NEAR CAIRO.

UNT Emma," said Charlie, one day when he had been amusing himself by looking over for the twentieth time some of the trays from his aunt's cabinet, which she had taken out and placed on a chair beside him; "where did you get this stone crab? It is very perfect."

"Ah! Charlie, that crab, and the shells beside it, are from near Cairo; and remind me," said his aunt, "of one of my pleasantest excursions; shall I tell you about it?"

"Oh do, please; I have not heard one of your stories for a long time, not since Friday, nearly a week, I declare! and I am longing for one. Now sit down comfortably and begin, and I will keep the crab beside me—no fear of his pinching me, though his claws are a good size—and hear how you got him, and where."

"Well, Charlie, you know that I was travelling with a party of friends, and of course I had to do as they liked, and could not go about independently. They were good-natured people, and we got on very well by means of a little forbearance, without which, as you know, there is not much to be done in this world; though our tastes were very different. My friends liked to see all the regular sights, and to do every thing that ought to be done; but they did not care to go much out of their way, or to take any extra trouble; and as to poking about in inconvenient places for natural curiosities, or going to spots where there was not much to be seen merely because some brave deed had been done there in old time, or some vestige of antiquity was to be traced, they would have considered such a proceeding very tiresome and a great waste of time.

"Now I knew that the limestone hills of the Mohkattam were full of fossils, and that in the desert on the way to them were many ancient and very beautiful tombs, and I greatly wished to visit both of these places before leaving Cairo, but I saw no chance of doing so. However, I watched my opportunity, and there came a day when our party were to join with other sight-seers in visiting the Pasha's fine palace at Shoobra, and I resolved, instead of going with them, to make an expedition in the opposite direction by myself.

"As to palaces, I had seen more than enough of them already, for it is only a question which of them can boast of the finest upholstery, the biggest rooms, and the grandest furniture, unless, indeed, there are beautiful paintings too; but Shoobra is not possessed of these, and can only display a gaudy magnificence, for which I do not care.

"So, taking as guide a very careful, intelligent Copt, who had accompanied us on other excursions, I set forth, quite as much delighted at getting a day to myself as any boy or girl bent on a grand nutting expedition. I meant to spend the whole day out, so of course I put up provisions for myself and Tadrous, not forgetting some bread for the good little donkey; and these things I packed in a wallet, which would suit admirably for bringing home the spoils I expected to obtain.

"I did not carry my wonderful hammer and chisel, because they would have been of little use, and I knew that the men working in the quarries would be provided with tools.

"It was a lovely December morning, that is to say, such a one as we here often have in August—deliciously warm, but not so much so as to make exposure to the heat dangerous, and slightly hazy—that haze which so beautifies everything, making lovely things look lovelier, and even common ones attractive. But then you know, Charlie, I was out on an adventure, and of course I was doubly pleased with everything.

"We first took our way through a number of poor streets with shops on each side, and I was much struck with the graceful shapes of the jugs, vases, &c., for common use. They are all of antique design, and the pewter bowls I saw in the eating-houses had pretty patterns in black engraved upon them. Other things too were very quaint; for instance, a pair of spectacles for the desert, to keep the sand from blowing into the eyes, and made of two oval pieces of leather, fully two inches and a half wide, fastened together; in the centre of each piece, secured by a circle of tin, was a piece of glass. Imagine how convenient and comfortable they must be!

"Then there were drinking cups made of gourds, with rude carving coloured in black or red upon them; bottles for containing kohl and rose-water to paint the eyes with, and sewn up in queer affairs like pincushions adorned with fringes of shells or hazel-nuts; the oddest little looking-glasses and wooden combs; common bracelets, made of

brass wire twisted into very elegant patterns, and earrings certainly eight inches long, composed of a number of chains fastened together, with tinkling ornaments at the end of each chain: but I cannot attempt to tell you of half the odd things I noticed.

"Some of these poor houses had trees, flowers, &c., painted in very bright colours on their outside walls, and even in some cases processions, like the rudest pictures in the ancient tombs. Lane tells us that it is customary to adorn in this manner the houses of pilgrims just before their return from Mecca.

"Every now and then, however, we came to quite grand houses, with fine arched doorways and carved window lattices; one building in particular was decorated with coloured stucco, and was quite unlike anything I had before seen.

"Leaving the town by a fine old gateway called the Bab e Nasr, the one by which the pilgrims leave the city, I found myself in the desert and amongst the tombs of the Circassian Memlook kings, which are dotted about as far as the eye can reach, and look exceedingly grand, though most of them hastening to decay. Each tomb is connected with a mosque, and beside it are the dwellings of the people in charge. From the style of architecture one might fancy that they were Italian churches.

"I rode about among them; sometimes a wall fallen in discloses a window like that of a cathedral, with a pointed arch and rich tracery; in many cases the domes, still quite perfect, are covered with raised geometrical patterns in inexhaustible variety, and all beautiful.

"I wished to enter one or two of the finest buildings, and began with that of E' Zaher Berkook, first Sultan of the Memlooks; he who so bravely resisted, and twice repulsed, the all-conquering Timour. I thought the old iron-cased door would never be opened, it required the joint efforts of so many men, women, and children, to persuade the clumsy wooden lock to give way."

"A wooden lock, aunty!" said Charlie; "I should not fancy that would be of much use."

"I believe they are easily picked, but they are of almost universal use in Egypt, and are very curious; they are in large buildings often as much as two feet long, and in mosques or ornamental buildings are inlaid with ebony and ivory. The lock has within it a number of iron pins which fit into holes in a sliding bolt; and the key, which is nearly

as curious as the lock itself, being also furnished with pins corresponding to the holes, pushes up the pins of the lock, and so enables the bolt to be withdrawn. As I said before, this took some time in the present instance, but it was accomplished, and we got in, and found the floor and part of the walls inlaid with marbles and stones of every colour. The mosque opens upon a beautiful court surrounded by columns supporting arches, and having in its centre a fountain shaded by tamarisk trees. A fountain of some kind is always to be found close to a mosque, much washing being strictly enjoined by the Korân, the book written by the prophet Mohammed, and which the Mussulmans hold as sacred as we Christians do the Bible. To the right and left of the mosque are the tombs of the Sultan and his family, concealed behind doors of close lattice-work.

“At that end of the building which points towards Mecca, the part where prayer is made, are several rows of marble columns supporting arches, above which rise several small domes.

“The description of one of these beautiful buildings will suffice for all; not that they are alike, for each has some difference in its construction, but the style is the same, though some are more richly decorated and much better preserved than others. They were built at different dates, but chiefly in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries: it is a great pity to see so many of them in ruins, the stained-glass windows broken, and even the beautiful domes shattered and destroyed.

“Those which are perfect have, some of them, graceful minarets, and within there is usually a quaint old pulpit, carved and brightly painted, with very steep steps leading to it. From the roof hung innumerable ostrich eggs, some real, but others imitations in china, but all decorated with silk network and tassels.

“Sometimes you are not allowed to see the tombs, but when you do get a glimpse of them you find them covered with a sort of patch-work of coloured cloth sewn into different patterns, or it may be with valuable Cashmere shawls, which you rather regret to see lying there and falling to pieces.

“After riding for some time among these beautiful buildings, I left the last some distance behind me, and came to a shady avenue leading to Matarëeh, a village very near the site of the ancient Heliopolis. On each side of this avenue are fertile fields, and it was interesting to recollect that this was a part of the land of Goshen, which was so long

inhabited by the children of Israel. Presently we saw a tall obelisk rising from a group of trees, and soon came to a line of brick mounds, once probably a wall enclosing the temple of the sun. Great numbers of these bricks bear the stamp of Thotmes III., and as he is generally believed to have been the Pharaoh who so cruelly oppressed the Israelites, there is little doubt that these are some of the very bricks they were forced to make, more especially as they contain scarcely any straw; they therefore crumble away very easily, and are very difficult to carry home, but some of them have been brought to England. Heliopolis is a Greek translation of the ancient Egyptian name *Re-ei*, or *Ei Re*, the house or abode of the sun; its Chaldean name was *Rabeck*, its Jewish one *Bethshemesh*, and its Scriptural and Coptic name *On*.

"This city was once famous for wisdom and learning; Plato, Eudoxius, and Herodotus studied there; and there it was that Joseph married Asenath, the daughter of Potipherah, priest of On: it was destroyed by Nebuchadnezzar, and all that now remains of it consists of the mounds, the obelisk, and a broken statue, though it is likely that if excavations were carried on much interesting matter might be brought to light. The obelisk is about seventy feet high, and formed of red syenite; the inscriptions upon it show that it dates from the time of Osirtasen I., Joseph's contemporary. Many of the hieroglyphics are quite perfect, but on two sides they have been quite filled up with mud by the mason bee, who takes advantage of the cuttings in the stone to build his dwelling. This obelisk stands in a garden full of orange, lemon, and citron trees, which were loaded with fruit. In another garden there is a very old sycamore fig tree, of which tradition reports that the blessed Virgin, with St. Joseph and the infant Saviour, reposed under it on their way into Egypt. It is hardly likely that the tree can have survived so very long, but it is evidently of a great age.

"These gardens were formerly celebrated for producing balsam, the plants of which are said to have been brought from Judæa by Cleopatra: this is the balm of Gilead mentioned in the Bible. In later times, some of these plants were taken from Matarëeh to Arabia, and grown near Mecca, from whence the drug is exported to Europe under the name of balsam of Mecca, and it is no longer to be found in the gardens at Heliopolis.

"Time did not permit me to stay in this interesting place as long as I should have wished, for I had to reach the quarries; therefore, mounting the donkey, I rode back through the long avenue, and then turning off soon found myself among the hills. The scenery is very fine, the rocks being broken here and there into such wild confusion that the Arabs say the genie played at ball with them by order of Sultan Sulieman.

"When I reached the quarries I thought it high time to consume my provender, and make room in my wallet for other treasures; also to let Tadrous and the donkey rest and refresh themselves; so taking up a convenient position for the purpose, I had at the same time plenty of amusement in watching the men at their work, and the camels receiving their loads of stone and marching off in a stately manner in long files, while others were winding up the ascent to be laden in succession. They carried the stones in a kind of network of rope like panniers. I had also a fine view of the city—the citadel rising grandly before me, the modern mosque of Mohammed Ali beside it, with its singularly slender minarets contrasting pleasingly with the solid battlements of the other building.

"When the quarrymen found that I wanted fossils they produced enough to have loaded the donkey, but as I preferred riding him myself, and knew also that I could only convey a moderate number to England, I selected those I preferred, some crabs, shells, sharks' teeth, and small fish, and making my new friends happy with backsheesh, packed up the wallet, and rode on again amongst innumerable tombs of Santons, Mussulman holy men, till I came quite close to the citadel, where I turned off and entered Cairo by the Yasafa Gate, near to the Jews' burying-ground.

"It was now evening, and I had to ride pretty quickly; there were a few lights here and there in the dim streets, trays of leban were being carried about, kabobs preparing, and the evening meal about to begin.

"When I got back to the hotel, I found my party returned from Shoobra, and quite as tired but not half so well pleased as I was myself; so I was far from regretting my day's excursion."

"I should think not," said Charlie; "I should have liked it too; but tell me, please, auntie, about the pilgrims you mentioned once or twice—who are they, and what do they do?"


"Every Mussulman is enjoined in the Koràn to make a pilgrimage

once in his life to Mecca and Mount Arafât, unless poverty or ill-health prevent him ; therefore every year a large number of persons, generally, it is said, as many as seventy thousand, start on this journey, which is attended with considerable privations, though it is not by any means so difficult or dangerous a performance as it used to be. Great ceremonies take place on the departure and at the return of the caravans : we were present at the latter during our stay in Cairo, and I will tell you about them some other time ; but we have had enough talking for to-day, and as I have given you something to think about, I will leave you, dear Charlie, for the present."

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER VI.

A HOME STATION.—WHAT MRS. BULLER THOUGHT OF IT.—WHAT
MAJOR BULLER THOUGHT OF IT.

IFLEBURY, in the south of England—our next station—was a very lively place. "There was always something going on." "Somebody was always dropping in." "People called and stayed to lunch in a friendly way." "There was always some one at afternoon tea." "What with croquet and archery in the Gardens, meeting friends on the Esplanade, concerts at the Rooms, shopping, and changing one's novels at the circulating library, one really never had a dull hour." So said "everybody;" and one or two people, including Major Buller, added that "one never had an hour to oneself."

"If you had any one occupation, you'd know how maddening it is," he exclaimed, one day, in a fit of desperation.

"Any one occupation!" cried Mrs. Buller, to whom he had spoken. "I'm sure, Edward, I'm always busy. I never have a quiet moment from morning to night, it seems to me. But it is so like you men! You can stick to one thing all along, and your meals come to you as if they dropped out of the skies, and your clothes come ready-made from the tailors (and very dearly they have to be paid for, too!); and when one is ordering dinner and luncheon, and keeping one's clothes decent, and looking after the children and the servants, and

taking your card, and contriving excuses that are not fibs for you to the people you ought to call on, from week's end to week's end—you say one has no occupation."

"Well, well, my dear," said the Major, "I know you have all the trouble of the household, but I meant to say that if you had any pursuit, any study——"

"And as to visitors," continued Aunt Theresa, who always pursued her own train of ideas, irrespective of any replies, "I'm sure society's no pleasure to me; I only call on the people you ought to call on, and keep up a few acquaintances for the children's sake. You wouldn't have us without a friend in the world when the girls come out; and really, what with regimental duties in the morning, and insects afterwards, Edward, you are so absorbed, that if it wasn't for a lady friend coming in now and then, I should hardly have a soul to speak to."

The Major was melted in a moment.

"I am afraid I am a very inattentive husband," he said. "You must forgive me, my dear. And this sprained ankle keeping me in makes me cross, too. And I had so reckoned on these days at home to finish my list of Coleoptera, and get some dissecting and mounting done. But to-day, Mrs. Minchin brought her work directly after breakfast, and that empty-headed fellow Elliott dropped in for lunch, and we had callers all the afternoon, and a *coterie* for tea, and Mrs. St. John (who seems to get through life somehow without the most indefinite notion of how time passes) came in just when tea was over, and you had to order a fresh supply when we should have been dressing for dinner, and the dinner was spoilt by waiting till she discovered that she had no idea (whoever did know her have an idea?) how late it was, and that Mr. St. John would be so angry. And now you want me to go in a cab to a concert at the Rooms to meet all these people over again!"

"I'm sure I don't care for Mrs. St. John a bit more than you do," said Mrs. Buller. "And really she does repeat such things sometimes—without ever looking round to see if the girls are in the room. She told me a thing to-day that old Lady Watford had told her."

"My dear, her ladyship's stories are well known. Cremorne's wife hears them from her, and tells them to her husband, and he tells them to the other fellows. I can always hear them if I wish. But I do not

care to. But if you don't like Mrs. St. John, Theresa, what on earth made you ask her to come and sit with you in the morning?"

"Well, my dear, what can I do?" said Mrs. Buller. "She's always saying that everybody is so unsociable, and that she is so dull, she doesn't know what to do with herself, and begging me to take my work and go and sit with her in a morning. How can I go and leave the children and the servants, just at the time of day when everything wants to be set going? So I thought I'd better ask her to come here instead. It's a great bore, but I can keep an eye over the house, and if any one else drops in I can leave them together. It's not me that she wants, it's something to amuse her."

"You talk about my having nothing to do," Aunt Theresa plaintively continued. "But I'm sure I can hardly sleep at night sometimes for thinking of all I ought to do and haven't done. Mrs. Jerrold, you know, made me promise faithfully when we were coming away to write to her every mail, and I never find time. Every week as it comes round I think I will, and can't. I used to think that one good thing about coming home would be the no more writing for the English mail; but the Indian mail is quite as bad. And I'm sure mail-day seems to come round quicker than any other day of the week. I quite dread Fridays. And then your mother and sisters are always saying I never write. And I heard from Mrs. Pryce Smith only this morning, telling me I owed her two letters; and I don't know what to say to her when I do write, for she knows nobody *here*, and I know nobody *there*. And we've never returned the Ridgeways' call, my dear. And we've never called on the Mercers since we dined there. And Mrs. Kirkshaw is always begging me to drive out and spend a long day at the Abbey. I know she is getting offended, I've put her off so often; and Mrs. Minchin says she is very touchy. And Mrs. Taylor looks quite reproachfully at me because I've not been near the Dorcas meetings so long. But it's all very well for people who have no children to work at these things. A mother's time is not her own, and charity begins at home. I'm sure I never seem to be at rest, and yet people are never satisfied. Lady Burchett says she's certain I am never at home, for she always misses me when she calls, and Mrs. Graham says I never go out she's sure, for she never meets me anywhere."

"Isn't all that just what I say?" said Major Buller, laying down his knife and fork. (The discussion took place at dinner.) "It's the

tyranny of the idle over the busy, and why, in the name of common sense, should it be yielded to? Why should friends be obliged, at the peril of disparagement of their affection or good manners, to visit each other when they do not want to go, to receive each other when it is not convenient, and to write to each other when there is nothing to say. You women, my dear, are more foolish in this respect than men, I must say. Men simply won't write long letters to their friends when they've nothing to say, and I don't think their friendships suffer by it. And though there are heaps of idle gossiping fellows as well as ladies with the same qualities, a man who was busy would never tolerate them to his own inconvenience, much less invite them to persecute him. We are more straightforward with each other, and that is, after all, the firmest foundation for friendship. It is partly a misplaced amiability, a phase of the unselfishness in which you excel us, and partly also, I think, a want of some measuring quality that makes you women exact unreasonable things, make impossible promises, and after blandly undertaking a multiplicity of small matters that would tax the method of a man of business to accomplish punctually, put your whole time at the disposal of every fool who is pleased to waste it."

"It's all very well talking, Edward," said Aunt Theresa. "But what is one to do?"

"Make a stand," said the Major. "When you're busy, and can't conveniently see people, let your servant tell them so in as many words. The friendship that can't survive that is hardly worth keeping, I think. Eh, my dear?"

But I suppose the stand was to be made further on, for Major Buller took Aunt Theresa to the concert at "the Rooms."

CHAPTER VII.

DRESS AND MANNER.—I EXAMINE MYSELF.—MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.

WHEN we began our biographies we resolved that neither of us should read the other's till both were finished. This was partly because we thought it would be more satisfactory to be able to go straight through them, partly as a check on a propensity for beginning things and not finishing them, to which we are liable, and partly from the childish habit of "saving up the treat for the last," as we

used—in “old times”—to pick the raisins out of the puddings and lay them by for a *bonne bouche* when we should have done our duty by the more solid portion.

But our resolve has given way. We began by very much wishing to break it, and we have ended by finding excellent reasons for doing so.

We both wish to read the biographies—why should we tease ourselves by sticking obstinately to our first opinion?

No doubt it would be nice to read them “straight through.” But we are rather apt to devour books at a pace unfavourable to book-digestion, so perhaps it will be better still to read them by bits, as one reads a thing that “comes out in numbers.”

And, in short, at this point, Eleanor took mine and has read it, and I have read hers. She lays down mine, saying, “But, my dear, you don’t remember all this?”

Which is true. What I have recorded of my first English home is more what I know about it from other sources than what I positively remember. And yet I have positive memories of my own about it, too.

I have hinted that my poor young mother did not look after me much. Also that the Ayah, who had a mother’s love and care for me, paid very little attention to my being tidy in person or dress, except when I was exhibited to “company.”

But my mother was dead. Ayah (after a terrible parting) was left behind in India. And, from the time that I passed into Aunt Theresa’s charge, matters were quite changed.

I do remember the dresses I had then, and the keen interest I took in the subject of dress at a very early age. A very keen interest was taken in it by Aunt Theresa herself, by Aunt Theresa’s daughters, and by the ladies of Aunt Theresa’s acquaintance. I think I may say that it formed (at least one of) the principal subjects of conversation during all those working hours of the day which the ladies so freely sacrificed to each other. Mrs. Buller was truly kind, and I am sure that if I had depended in every way upon her, she would have given to my costume as much care as she bestowed upon that of her own daughters. But my parents had not been poor; there was no lack of money for my maintenance, and thus “no reason,” as Aunt Theresa said, why my clothes should not be “decent.” And “decent,” with Aunt Theresa and her friends, was a synonym for “fashionable.”

Thus my first black frock was such an improvement (in fashion) upon the pink silk one, as to deprive my deep mourning of much of its gloom. Mrs. (Colonel) St. Quentin could not refuse to lend one of her youngest little girl's frocks as a copy, for "the poor little orphan;" and a bevy of ladies sat in consultation over it, for all Mrs. St. Quentin's things were well worth copying.

"Keep a paper pattern, dear," said Mrs. Minchin; "it will come in for the girls. Her things are always good."

And Mrs. Buller kept a paper pattern.

I remember the dress quite clearly. It is fixed in my mind by an incident connected with it. It had six crape tucks, of which fact I was very proud, having heard a good deal said about it. The first time Mr. George came to our bungalow, after I began to wear it, I strutted up to him holding my skirt out, and my head up.

"Look at my black frock, Mr. George," said I; "it has got six crape tucks."

Maria was most precocious in—at least—one way: she could repeat grown-up observations of wonderful length.

"It's the best crape," she said; "it won't spot. Cut on the bias. They're not real tucks though, Margery. They're laid on; Mrs. Minchin said so."

"They are real tucks," I stoutly asserted.

"No, they're not. They're cut on the bias, and laid on to imitate tucks," Maria repeated. I think she was not sorry there should be some weak point in the fashionable mourning in which she did not share.

I turned to Mr. George, as usual.

"Aren't they real tucks, Mr. George?"

But Mr. George had a strange look on his face which puzzled and disconcerted me. He only said, "Good heavens!" And all my after efforts were in vain to find out what he meant, and why he looked in that strange manner.

Little things that puzzle one in childhood remain long in one's memory. For years I puzzled over that look of Mr. George's, and the remembrance never was a pleasant one. It chilled my enthusiasm for my new dress at the time, and made me feel inclined to cry. I think I have lived to understand it.

But I was not insensible of my great loss, though I took pride

in my fashionable mourning. I do not think I much connected the two in my mind. I did not talk about my father to any one but Mr. George, but at night I often lay awake and cried about him. This habit certainly affected my health, and I had become a very thin weak child when the home voyage came to restore my strength.

By the time we reached Rifebury, my fashionable new dress was neither new nor fashionable. It was then that Mrs. Minchin ferreted out a dressmaker whom Mrs. St. Quentin employed, and I was put under her hands.

The little Bullers' things were "made in the house," after the pattern of mine.

"And one sees the fashion-book, and gets a few hints," said Mrs. Buller.

If Mr. George was not duly impressed by my fashionable mourning, I could (young as I was) trace the effect of Aunt Theresa's care for my appearance on other friends in the regiment. They openly remarked on my appearance, and did not scruple to do so in my hearing. Callers from the neighbourhood patronised me also. Pretty ladies in fashionably pitched bonnets smiled, and said, "One of your little ones, Mrs. Buller? What a pretty little thing!" and duly sympathised over the sad story which Aunt Theresa seemed almost to enjoy relating. Sometimes it was agony to me to hear the oft repeated tale of my parents' death, and then again I enjoyed a sort of gloomy importance which gave me satisfaction. I even rehearsed such scenes in my mind when I was in bed, shedding real tears as (in the person of Aunt Theresa) I related the sad circumstances of my own grief to an imaginary acquaintance; and then, with dry eyes, prolonging the "fancy" with compliments and consolations of the most flattering nature. I always took care to fancy some circumstances that led to my being in my best dress on the occasion.

Gentleman-company did not haunt my new home as was the case with the Indian one. But now and then officers of the regiment called on Mrs. Buller, and would say, "Is that poor Vandaleur's child? Dear me! Very interesting little thing;" and speculate in my hearing on the possibility of my growing up like my mother.

"'Pon my soul, she is like her!" said one of "the middle ones" one day, examining me through his eyeglass. "Th' same expressive eyes, you know, and just that graceful gracious little manner poor

Mrs. Vandaleur had. By Jove, it was a shocking thing! She was an uncommonly pretty woman."

"You never saw *her* mother, my good fellow," said one of the "old ones" who was present. "She *had* a graceful gracious manner, if you like, and Mrs. Vandaleur was not to be named in the same day with her. Mrs. Vandaleur knew how to dress, I grant you——"

"You may go and play, Margery dear," said Aunt Theresa, with kindly delicacy. The "old one" had lowered his voice, but still I could hear what he said, as Mr. Buller saw.

When my father was not spoken of my feelings were very little hurt. On this occasion my mind was engaged simply with the question whether I did or did not inherit my mother's graces. I ran to a little looking-glass in the nursery and examined my eyes; but when I tried to make them "expressive" I either frowned so unpleasantly, or stared so absurdly, that I could not flatter myself on the point.

The girls were out; I had nothing to do; the nursery was empty. I walked about, shaking out my skirts, and thinking of my gracious and graceful manner. I felt a pardonable curiosity to see this for myself, and remembering the big glass in Aunt Theresa's room I stole out to see if I could make use of it unobserved. But the gentlemen had gone, and I feared that Mrs. Buller might come upstairs. In a few minutes, however, the door bell rang, and I heard the sound of a visitor being ushered into the drawing-room.

I seized the chance and ran to Aunt Theresa's room.

The mirror was "full length," and no one could see me better than I now saw myself. Once more I attempted to make expressive eyes, but the result was not favourable to vanity. Then I drew back to the door, and advancing upon the mirror with mincing steps, I threw all the grace and graciousness of which I was conscious into my manner, and holding out my hand, said, in a "company voice," "*Charmed to see you, I'm sure!*"

"*Mais c'est bien drôle !*" said a soft voice close behind me.

I had not heard the door open, and yet there stood Aunt Theresa on the threshold, and with her a little old lady. The little old lady had a bright delicately cut face, eyes of whose expressiveness there could be no question, and large grey curls. She wore a large hat with large bows, tied under her chin, and a dark green satin driving cloak lined with white and grey fur.

She looked like a fairy godmother, like the ghost of an ancestor—like “somebody out of a picture.” She was my great-grandmother.



CHAPTER VIII.

MY GREAT-GRANDMOTHER.—THE DUCHESS'S CARRIAGE.—MRS. O'CONNOR IS
CURIOUS.

I was much discomfited. My position was not a dignified one at the best, and in childhood such small shames seem too terrible ever to be

outlived. My great-grandmother laughed heartily, and Mrs. Buller, whose sense of humour was small, looked annoyed.

"What in the world are you doing here, Margery?" she said.

I had little or no moral courage, and I had not been trained in high principles. If I could have thought of a plausible lie, I fear I should have told it in my dilemma. As it was, I could not; I only put my hand to my burning cheek, and said, "Let me see!"

I must certainly have presented a very comical appearance, but the little old lady's smiles died away, and her eyes filled with tears.

"It is strange, is it not," she said to Aunt Theresa, "that after all I should laugh at this meeting?"

Then sitting down on a box by the door, she held out her hands to me, saying, "Come, little Margery, there is no sin in practising one's good manners before the mirror. Come and kiss me, dear child; I am your father's father's mother. Is not that to be an old woman? I am your great-grandmother."

My great-grandmother's voice was very soft, her cheek was soft, her cloak was soft. I buried my face in the fur, and cried quietly to myself with shame and excitement; she stroking my hand and saying, "*Pauvre petite!*—thou an orphan, and I doubly childless. It is thus we meet at last to join our hands across the graves of two generations of those we love!"

"It was a dreadful thing!" said Mrs. Buller, rummaging in her pocket for a clean handkerchief. "I'm sure I never should forget it, if I lived a thousand years. I never seemed able to realize that they were gone. It was all so sudden."

The old lady made no answer, and we all wept in silence.

Aunt Theresa was the first to recover herself, and she insisted on our coming downstairs. A young regimental surgeon and his wife dropped in to lunch, for which my great-grandmother stayed. We were sitting in the drawing-room afterwards when "Mrs. Vandaleur's carriage" was announced. As my great-grandmother took leave of me, she took off a watch and chain and hung them on my neck. It was a small French watch with an enamelled back of dark blue, on which was the word *Souvenir* in small pearls.

"I gave it to your grandfather, long years ago, my child, and he gave it back to me—before he sailed. I would only part with it to his son's child. Farewell, *petite*. Be good, dear child; try to be good.

Adieu, Mrs. Buller, and a thousand thanks. Major Buller, I am at your service."

Major Buller took the hand she held out to him and led the old lady to the front door, whither we all followed them.

Mrs. Vandaleur's carriage was before the steps. It was a very quaint little box on two wheels, in by no means good repair. It was drawn by a pony, white, old, and shaggy. At the pony's head stood a small boy in decent, but not smart, plain clothes.

"Put the mat over the wheel to save my dress, Adolphe," said the old lady, and as the little boy obeyed her order, she stepped nimbly into the carriage, assisted by the Major. "The silk is old," she observed complacently, "but it is my best, of course, or it would not have been worn to-day," and she gave a graceful little bow towards Aunt Theresa; "and I hope that, with care, it will serve as such for the rest of my life, which cannot be very long.

"If it wears as well as you do, madam," said Major Buller, tucking her in, "it may: not otherwise."

The surgeon was leaning over the other side of the little cart, and seemed also to be making polite speeches. It recalled the way that men used to hang upon my mother's carriage. The old lady smiled, and made gracious little replies, and, meanwhile, deliberately took off her kid gloves, folded, and put them into her pocket. She then drew on a pair of old worsted ones.

"Economy—economy," she said, smiling, and giving a hand on each side of her to the two gentlemen. "May I trouble you for the reins? Many thanks. Farewell, gentlemen. I cannot pretend to fear that my horse will catch cold; his coat is too thick; but you may. Adieu, Mrs. Buller, once more. Farewell, little one. I wish you good-morning, madam. Adolphe, seat yourself. Make your bow, Adolphe. Adieu, dear friends."

She gave a flick with the whip, which the pony resented by shaking his head. After which he seemed, so to speak, to snatch up the little cart, my great-grandmother and Adolphe, and to run off with them at a good round pace.

"What an extraordinary turn-out!" said the surgeon's wife. (She was an Irish attorney's daughter, with the commonest of faces, and the most unprecedented of bonnets. She and her husband had lately "set up" a wagonette, the expense of which just made it difficult for

them to live upon their means, and the varnish of which added a care to life.) "Fancy driving down High Street in that!" she continued, "and just when everybody is going out, too."

"Uncommon sensible little affair, I think," said the surgeon. "Suits the old lady capitally."

"Mrs. Vandaleur," said Major Buller, "can afford to be independent of appearances to an extent that would not perhaps be safe for most people."

"You're right there, Buller," said the surgeon. "Wonderfully queenly she is! That fur cloak looks like an ermine robe on her."

"I don't think you'd like to see me in it!" tittered his wife.

"I don't say I should," returned the surgeon, rather smartly.

"My dear," said Mrs. Buller, "you must make up your mind to be jealous of the Duchess. All gentlemen are mad about her."

"The Duchess?" said Mrs. O'Connor, in a tone of respect. "I thought you said——"

"Oh, she's not really a duchess, my dear, it's only a nickname. I'll tell you all about it some day. It's a long story."

Discovering that Mrs. Vandaleur was a family connection, and not a chance visitor from the neighbourhood, Mrs. O'Connor apologized for her remarks, and tried to extract the Duchess's history from Aunt Theresa then and there. But Mrs. Buller would only promise to tell it "another time."

"I'm dying with curiosity," said Mrs. O'Connor, as she took leave. "I shall run in to-morrow afternoon on purpose to hear all about it. Can you do with me, dear Mrs. Buller?"

"Pray come," said Aunt Theresa, warmly, with an amiable disregard of two engagements, and some arrears of domestic business.

I was in the drawing-room next day when Mrs. O'Connor arrived.

"May I come in, dear Mrs. Buller?" she said. "I won't stay two minutes. But I must hear about the Duchess. Now are you busy?"

"Not at all," said Aunt Theresa, who was in the midst of making up her tradesmen's books. "Pray sit down, and take off your bonnet."

"It's hardly worth while, for I *can't* stay," said Mrs. O'Connor, taking her bonnet off, and setting it down so as not to crush the flowers.

As Mrs. O'Connor stayed two hours and a half, and as Aunt Theresa granted my request to be allowed to hear her narrative, I learnt a good deal of the history of my great-grandmother.

(To be continued.)

BURIED NAMES OF NOTE.

1. Ho! merry girls and laughing boys,
Cease all your chatter and your noise,
2. And let your hearts be eager swelling
To name the men of whom I'm telling.
3. Of many a captain and a colonel
So noble and so brave I tell,
4. Of the wise sage, the poet's pen,
Servants of fame, all noble men,
5. Who still live on, though they may be
Dead to all else but memory.
6. This man so noble was that he
Has spread his name o'er land and sea.
7. O'er this man's tomb a constant blaze
Should celebrate his lasting praise;
8. By sundry dense and wise experiments
He did discover the ingredients
9. By which, in many wars terrific,
Lives have been lost of men heroic.
10. But none could fathom all he knew,
To name his works words are too few.
11. This lady's praises shall be sung
At tyros' homes by every tongue;
12. The children of Aunt Judy's Cot
To her ascribe their happy lot.
13. All you who her attention claim,
O read these lines and find her name.

E. M. L.

The Walrus and the Carpenter.

From "Through the Looking-glass."

Words by LEWIS CARROLL.

Music by ALFRED SCOTT GATTY.

The Sun was shin - ing on the sea,

This system contains the first line of the song. It features a vocal melody in treble clef and piano accompaniment in grand staff (treble and bass clefs). The key signature has two flats (B-flat and E-flat), and the time signature is common time (C). The lyrics are 'The Sun was shin - ing on the sea,'.

Shining with all his might; He did his ve - ry

This system contains the second line of the song. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'Shining with all his might; He did his ve - ry'.

best to make The bil - - lows smooth and bright—

This system contains the third line of the song. It continues the vocal melody and piano accompaniment. The lyrics are 'best to make The bil - - lows smooth and bright—'.

piu lento.

And this was odd, be-cause it was The middle, the

piu lento.

middle, the mid-dle of the night.

2.

The Moon was shining sulkily,
Because she thought the sun
Had got no business to be there
After the day was done:—
“It’s very rude of him,” she said,
“To come and spoil the fun!”

3.

The sea was wet as wet could be,
The sands were dry as dry;
You could not see a cloud, because
No cloud was in the sky:
No birds were flying overhead—
There were no birds to fly.

4.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Were walking close at hand;
They wept like anything to see
Such quantities of sand:
“If this were only cleared away,”
They said, “it *would* be grand!”

5.

“If seven maids with seven mops
Swept it for half a year,
Do you suppose,” the Walrus said,
“That they could get it clear?”
“I doubt it,” said the Carpenter,
And shed a bitter tear.

6.

“O, Oysters, come and walk with us!”
The Walrus did beseech—
“A pleasant walk, a pleasant talk,
Along the briny beach:
We cannot do with more than four,
To give a hand to each.”

7.

The eldest Oyster looked at him,
But never a word he said:
The eldest Oyster winked his eye,
And shook his heavy head—
Meaning to say he did not choose
To leave the oyster-bed.

8.

But four young Oysters hurried up,
All eager for the treat;
Their coats were brushed, their faces
washed,
Their shoes were clean and neat—
And this was odd, because, you know,
They hadn't any feet.

9.

Four other Oysters followed them,
And yet another four;
And thick and fast they came at last,
And more, and more, and more—
All hopping through the frothy waves,
And scrambling to the shore.

10.

The Walrus and the Carpenter
Walked on a mile or so,
And then they rested on a rock
Conveniently low;
And all the little Oysters stood
And waited in a row.

11.

"The time has come," the Walrus said,
"To talk of many things: [wax—
"Of shoes—and ships—and sealing—
Of cabbages—and kings—
And why the sea is boiling hot—
And whether pigs have wings!"

12.

"But wait a bit," the Oysters cried,
"Before we have our chat;
For some of us are out of breath,
And all of us are fat!"
"No hurry!" said the Carpenter—
They thanked him much for that.

13.

"A loaf of bread," the Walrus said,
"Is what we chiefly need,
Pepper and vinegar besides,
Are very good indeed—
Now, if you're ready, Oysters dear,
We can begin to feed."

14.

"But not on us!" the Oysters cried,
Turning a little blue,
"After such kindness, that would be,
A dismal thing to do!"
"The night is fine," the Walrus said,
"Do you admire the view?"

15.

"It was so kind of you to come!
And you are very nice!"
The Carpenter said nothing, but
"Cut us another slice:
I wish you were not quite so deaf,
I've had to ask you twice!"

16.

"It seems a shame," the Walrus said,
"To play them such a trick,
After we've brought them out so far,
And made them trot so quick!"
The Carpenter said nothing, but
"The butter's spread too thick!"

17.

"I weep for you," the Walrus said,
"I deeply sympathize!"
With sobs and tears he sorted out
Those of the largest size,
Holding the pocket-handkerchief
Before his streaming eyes.

18.

"O, Oysters," said the Carpenter,
"You've had a pleasant run!
Shall we be trotting home again?"
But answer came there none—
And this was scarcely odd, because
They'd eaten every one.

THE PANCAKE.

From the Norse of Asbjørnsen.

NCE upon a time there was a woman who had seven hungry little children, and she said she would make a large dish of pancakes for their supper, such delicious pancakes, made of cream, so rich and thick; and while she was frying the first the children gathered round the fire, and the old grandfather sat in the chimney-corner and looked on.

"Oh, please give me a little bit to taste, mammy mine!" said the eldest.

"Please a little bit, dear mammy mine!" said the second.

"Please a little bit, dear, sweet mammy mine!" said the third.

"Please a little bit, dear, sweet, precious mammy mine!" said the fourth.

"Please a little bit, dear, sweet, precious, darling mammy mine!" said the fifth.

"Please a little bit, dear, sweet, precious, darling, best mammy mine!" said the sixth.

"Please a little bit, dear, sweet, precious, darling, best, little mammy mine!" said the seventh. This was how they asked, one more prettily than the others, because they were all *so* hungry and *so* good.

"Just wait till I turn it, darlings," answered the mother, "then you shall each have a piece. Just see how delicious it looks, and how thick it is getting!"

When the pancake heard this it was very much frightened, and tried to jump out of the pan; but instead it only fell over on the other side; and as soon as it had grown a little firmer, out it hopped on the floor, and away it rolled just like a wheel, out through the house door, and down the hill.

"Hei! hei!" cried the mother, running after it as fast as she could, the kitchen ladle in one hand, and the pan in the other. After her ran the children, and old grandfather hobbled last by the aid of his stick.

"Hei! hi! wait a minute! catch it, catch it!" they shouted all together; but the pancake rolled and rolled farther and farther, faster and faster, until they could see it no longer.

Before long it met a man.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the man.

"Good evening, Manny Panny," said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you."

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, and seven hungry children, so I think I may as well run away from you too, Manny Panny;" and it rolled and rolled till it met a little red hen.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the hen.

"Good evening, Henny Penny," said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you," said the hen.

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, seven hungry children, and Manny Panny, so I think I may as well run away from you too, Henny Penny," said the pancake, and on it rolled as fast as it could till it met a cock.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the cock.

"Good evening, Cocky Locky," said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you," said the cock.

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, seven hungry children, Manny Panny, and Henny Penny, so I shall run away from you, Cocky Locky," and away it rolled till it met a duck.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the duck.

"Good evening, Ducky Wucky, said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you," said the duck.

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, seven hungry children, Manny Panny, Henny Penny, and Cocky Locky, so I think I shall run away from Ducky Wucky," said the pancake, and it rolled and rolled till it met a goose.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the goose.

"Good evening, Goosey Poosey," said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you," said the goose.

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, seven hungry children, Manny Panny, Henny Penny, Cocky Locky, and Ducky Wucky, so I think I shall run away from Goosey Poosey," said the pancake, and it rolled and it rolled till it met a sheep.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the sheep.

"Good evening, Sheepy Meepy," said the pancake.

"Nice brown Pancake, don't roll so fast! wait a minute, and let me eat you," said the sheep.

"I have run away from mother, grandfather, seven hungry children, Manny Panny, Henny Penny, Cocky Locky, Ducky Wucky, and Goosey Poosey, so I think I shall run away from Sheepy Meepy," said the pancake, and rolled, and it rolled till it met a pig.

"Good evening, Pancake," said the pig.

"Good evening, Piggy Wiggy," said the pancake.

"Now nice brown Pancake, don't be in such a hurry! let us go through the wood together. I have heard there is a wolf there." The pancake was quite willing to do this, so they went on together till they came to a little brook. The pig was so fat that he floated quite easily; but the pancake was quite in a puzzle.

"Sit on my snout," said the pig, "and I'll take you over."

The pancake did so.

"Bite, tite!" said the pig, and swallowed the pancake in a trice; and as that was the end of it, it must be the end of my story also.

BOOK NOTICES.



LITTLE GRIG and "The Tinker's Letter." (W. W. Gardner, Paternoster Row.)

Two interesting stories by Mrs. Robert O'Reilly, well adapted for a village library, or reading to children in a Sunday school. "Little Grig" is specially touching, and full of good teaching for boys.

"Meggie of the Pines" and "The Babes in the Basket." (W. W. Gardner, Paternoster Row.) The scenes of both these tales are laid in America, and we should imagine, from the style of writing, by the pen of some transatlantic author; they are full of exciting incidents, particularly "The Babes in the Basket," which contains the adventures of two children, who are rescued by a negro nurse at the time of the outbreak in Jamaica.

"Kings of Judah and Israel." (Hatchards, Piccadilly.) This little book will require little recommendation beyond the fact that it is compiled by the author of "The Peep of Day." The work seems to us admirably done, in a strictly clear and simple style, which will be found invaluable in teaching children the facts of this somewhat perplexing portion of Scripture history. It is abundantly illustrated, and has also a map of Canaan, and table of the kings who reigned simultaneously over Israel and Judah, with the years of their reigns, &c., to simplify the lessons.

"The Pipits." (James Maclehose, Glasgow.) This is a very absurd story in verse of some conceited birds who want to have a larger egg than their neighbours, and are duly punished by having to rear a young cuckoo's. The

illustrations are profuse, and more brilliant than the letterpress; they are sufficient alone to insure the book a welcome in any nursery.

"Grumbling Tommy" and "Contented Harry." "Buster and Baby Jim." (Seeley, Jackson, and Halliday, Fleet Street.) These tales are reprinted, we

believe, from the "Children's Friend," in a very attractive and readable form, with large type, and plenty of pictures. They will be found very useful in village libraries. "Buster and Baby Jim" is for a rather older class of readers than the other, being the history of two young pickpockets, whose lives are reformed by a timely removal to a Boys' Refuge.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



MORTIMER LIGHTWOOD thinks that "Katie" must be mistaken in attributing the line, "To witch the world with lovely music," to Shakespeare. The nearest approach he can find is this: "To witch the world with *noble horsemanship*." Henry IV., Part I., Act 4, Scene 1.

"Dolly" has no more crests or monograms to exchange, but offers three hundred old penny postage stamps for three rare foreign ones. Address, 1, Primrose Hill Road, Adelaide Road, N.W.

"Arthur Rutter." You must go to some bookseller for the books you want, as they are endless in number, and Aunt Judy thinks you will choose them better from sight than from a list of names.

"Edith Mary" asks if there is a good English translation of Schiller's "Maria Stuart;" and if so, who by, and where it may be obtained?

"Bee" asks if any one can tell her whether Beethoven's twelve "Celebrated Waltzes" have been set as duets? she is specially anxious to obtain the last six in that form, and would like to know the name of the arranger and publisher.

"Inquirer." Hymn 82 is by the Rev. Isaac Williams; Hymn 222, by William Whiting, Esq. Messrs. Novello have published an edition of "Hymns Ancient and Modern," with the authors' and translators' names appended.

"Little Mary Seagrave" and "Miss

M. A. Butler" are sincerely thanked for their kind presents of flowers. The editor is also indebted to another correspondent for a pretty and sweet valentine.

"W. N. G." and a "Descendant of Eve," beg to inform "Xereahldiah" that the following lines occur in "Paradise Lost," Book 2, lines 714 and 715:

"As when two black clouds,
With heaven's artillery fraught."

Can any of our readers tell "A Lancashire Witch" where to find the quotation below?—

"Keep me through this night of peril
Underneath its boundless shade."

"Nellikins" writes to inform a "Chinese Pigmy" that the verses he inquired about are in a poem entitled "To May," by Wordsworth.

"Edith." Three correspondents recommend the following German magazines: "Die Gartenlaube," which contains stories, biographical sketches, and very good illustrations. Also the "Baumgarten." They can be procured from any foreign bookseller.

"Fiorella" asks for the names of some pretty comedies for drawing-room acting (not for children), requiring from six to nine actors. Aunt Judy can highly recommend one entitled "Perfection."

"Beatrice" wants to know where she can find the following quotation:

"A very lovely song of one that hath a pleasant voice."

"Pease-blossom." Aunt Judy knows

of no use to which such papers can be applied, except that of lighting fires.

"Deane" asks "how gold paint may be erased from an illumination?"

"W. A. F." wishes to know who is the author of the poem entitled "The Afterglow"?

"Cor Caroli" offers "five times the number of old postage stamps for any crests, monograms, foreign stamps, or designs for putting crests in a crest album." Address, Miss Stephenson, Roxby, Brigg, Lincolnshire.

"Arthur Atkinson" offers thirty crests or monograms for half as many rare foreign postage stamps. He has also a few foreign stamps to exchange. Address, Saltwell Dene Cottage, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

Aunt Judy is much obliged for "A Sphinx's" amusing note and receipt for painting Easter Eggs. It has been forwarded to "Dame Durden," as the sketch could not be given in "Correspondence."

Aunt Judy begs to thank "A. Dora Hoskyns" and "A Child Lover" for their kind notes, which gave her much pleasure. The latter correspondent mentions that she has a *collecting box* for the benefit of the Aunt Judy Cot, and sends up the contents yearly or half-yearly, which she suggests is perhaps a better plan than sending very small contributions monthly, and thereby expending money on postage. Aunt Judy is, however, glad to receive subscriptions at any time that is most convenient to the kind supporters of the Cot.

"John Adams." The back and front views of Cromwell House and playground are sixpence each; if wanted by post an addressed and stamped envelope should be sent.

"Ella." The fish is 72 inches in length, divided thus: head, 9 inches; tail, 27; back, 36; as stated in "Aunt Judy's Tales." You may work it out by Algebra, or by the "Rule of False," or

"Position" (as it is more commonly called). If you care to see this put down on paper, please send an addressed envelope to Aunt Judy.

"Kate B." asks if any of our correspondents have votes at their disposal for the next election to the Medical College, Epsom, as she knows of a very urgent case for which she would be glad to get help. Address, Hewish Rectory, Marlborough.

"Laura" has one hundred and seventy old postage stamps which she wants to exchange for crests or monograms. She will give six stamps for one crest. She wants to see a stamp snake; will any one lend her one? She will pay the postage. Address, Miss Kettle, Merri-dale, Wolverhampton.

"Mr. C. H. Scriven" has a collection of forty-seven different sorts of birds' eggs to dispose of, either in exchange or for sale. Price 10s. A list will be sent if required. Address, Castle Ashby, Northampton.

By the kindness of the owner the Doll-house of the reign of Queen Anne, of which a photograph was given in our number for October, 1870, is now exhibited at the South Kensington Museum. Many of our readers may be glad of the opportunity of inspecting the original: near it is a German Doll-house of the close of the seventeenth century, recently purchased at Nuremberg for the Museum.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, February 12th, 1872.

Elizabeth C—— (who still insists on being called "Toby") is progressing very satisfactorily, although at times suffering pain. She is not satisfied with *attracting* general attention, but really *demand*s it; for whenever a visitor appears in the ward where "Aunt Judy's Cot" is placed, she immediately calls out in her baby voice, "Lady," or "Man," and

when she has secured the attention she expects, she looks up in the sauciest way imaginable, and says, "I've Toby!"

Toby's conversational powers are small, and generally limited to a single word or two at a time; she succeeds however in making herself understood, and the following conversation will show how effectually monosyllables enable Toby to tell her troubles. One of the ladies, noticing a tear on her cheek, asked, "Has Toby been crying?" The answer came in a melancholy voice, "Yes." "What made Toby cry?" Again, in a melancholy tone, "Nurse." "How did Nurse make poor Toby cry?" "Leg" was the sorrowful explanation of the infant's trouble. Poor Toby's "leg" must be dressed and attended to, and, with all the tender, loving care of the nurse, that daily duty is a daily trial to the little one: in all other respects Toby's life is a happy one, for she is too young to think of what a much brighter lot hers might have been but for the poor suffering "leg."

A few days ago the chimney-sweepers (who come very early in the morning to do their work) were engaged in the ward where "Aunt Judy's Cot" is: on such occasions all the cots and their tenants are carefully covered over, and any of the children who are awake are told why this is done; they then lie still, rather amused by the proceeding; but Toby's active mind could not comply with this rule: was she to lie hidden while such a sight was to be seen?—no, indeed! The men with black faces, and their strange looking brooms, had no terrors for her—a small person who desired to investigate everything for herself must surely take note of this: after carefully peering from under the tent-like coverlid, Toby sat up and stretched out as far as she could to see the whole process; the consequence may easily be imagined. Her cot being nearest to the fireplace, the nurse was somewhat surprised to find that Toby's face, hands, pillow, and sheets, were all rivals to the wonderful people whose

doings had excited her interest on that early morning. If Toby is spared to grow up, and happens to read in one of the numbers (at page 88) of "Aunt Judy's Magazine" for 1867, about "The Scaramouches," who are described as performing some wonderful feats in chimney-sweeping, she will doubtless be well qualified to assist, if not to give general directions for a similar performance.

Toby's companion, Alexandrine T— (who has received many kind little presents from Aunt Judy's readers), is well enough to be taken to Cromwell House for change of air, and it will afford much pleasure to those who have manifested interest in her to know that some kind ladies have agreed to take her into a home at Margate, where she will be well cared for as long as she requires more than ordinary attention and treatment. Her father is very grateful for all that has been done for his child, and he insists on contributing his mite towards her support.

In answer to inquiries about the "little golden-haired Julia," who was noticed in the Cot report a few months ago, it may be said that after she had left the Hospital about six weeks she again became very ill, and was brought back so changed in appearance that she was scarcely recognised by those who had so recently known her; it was feared that the bright little flower was fading away, and would never revive again; but, with the blessing of God on the skill of the doctors, and the careful tending of a most devoted nurse, the danger has passed away, and it is now hoped that she will live to run about, and be her own merry little self again. Sometimes she is wrapped up in a warm dressing-gown, and carried into the ward where Toby is, to share a cot with one of the big girls—a sort of afternoon visit to take tea with a friend: this is always a great treat to the little girls, and not one of the patients enjoys it more than the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot" patient, Toby.

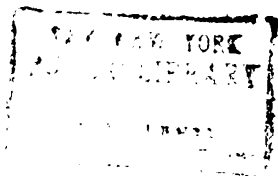
Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to February 13th, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
Miss Lawrence, 33 Imperial Square, Cheltenham (annual)	1	0	0
Agnes Richardson and her sisters (annual)	0	10	0
Ditto (collected), and a scrap-book	0	7	6
Janie and Mary, 18 Wilton Crescent (annual)	0	10	0
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie (monthly)	0	1	3
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	2	0
A. G. (monthly)	0	0	3
Little Etta (monthly)	0	0	6
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
Little Frankie (monthly)	0	1	0
Ethel, Isabel, Beatrice, Bertie, Maurice, and Violet, Harrow-on-the-Hill	0	10	0
Maude and Mildred	0	2	0
Miss Annie Christie, Ongar	0	5	0
Freddy's Farthings, saved in 1871, with some little gifts for the Children	0	0	9
The Children at Newark House, Richmond	0	6	0
The Schoolroom party of Acton Reynald	0	12	6
Collected by J. H. Scrutton, Bromley, Kent: Mrs. Crawshaw, 2s., J. H. Scrutton, 2s., P. E. Scrutton, 1s., J. Scrutton, Esq., 1s., Mrs. Scrutton, 2s.	0	8	0
Speedwell	0	1	0
Collected by Mary, Putney	1	5	6
Sissie, Gertie, and Bee, 1s. 3d., Nettie, 1d., Bessie, 2s. 1d., school-room fines, 1s. 4d., The Hall, Brompton Brian	0	4	9
Papa, 2s., Mamma, 1s., George, 1s., Nellie, 1s., Walter, 6d., Minnie, 4d., Bruno, 2d.	0	6	0
Mixed Pickles: Walter, Bertie, Amy, Etty, Lewis, and Baby, Denmark Hill	0	15	0

	£	s.	d.
Pa, Ma, Moonie, Edgie, Maurice, and Annie, Hill-side, Champion Hill	0	15	0
Mary Alice Eden, Aberford	0	1	0
Fanny, per Mrs. Smyth, Bygrave House, Baldock	0	2	0
Nesta	0	1	0
W. A. F., Oakhill Road, Surbiton	0	1	0
The Pol and Pen, and a scrap-book	0	4	0
In memory of dear little S. J. H., the contents of his purse, June 2nd, 1871	0	3	2
Mary C. Hamilton, The Castle, Killyligh, Co. Down (collected)	0	10	0
Nellie's money-box	2	0	0
Augusta Elizabeth Crook, 45, High Street, Eton	0	0	6
T. J. L., also a box of toys	0	2	6
May and Emmie, Edinburgh	0	6	0
Collected by May, Edinburgh	0	9	0
Miss Sarah Wienholt, Marine Parade, Brighton	0	5	0
"A Lancashire Witch"	0	1	0
Gertrude M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
Muriel Vernon	0	2	6
Fanny, 8d., Bunch, 1s., Gill, 1s. 3d., May, 6d., Bobus, 2d., Tomtit, 4d., Two Maids, 2d.	0	4	1
John Adams	0	1	0
"Sugar money:" Minnie, 2s. 6d., Ethel, 2s. 6d., Ewing, 2s. 6d., St. Ann's	0	7	6
Ethel M. M.	0	1	0
Bertie's earnings	0	0	1
F. S. W., Dublin	0	0	6
Hetty and Harry Böckow, Brackenhoe, Middlesbro'	0	5	0
Zoe and Beatrice Linwood Strong (collected)	0	1	0
"The Rectory twig-box"	1	10	0
Miss Hailstone, Walton Hall, Wakefield	0	5	0
Muriel and Annie Hoare	0	5	0
Harry Duff, Vaynol	0	1	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Fines for spilling the ink,				"Two little birds"	0	2	0
Roxby	0	1	0	Maggie Gilmour and Madeline			
Found in an old purse, 3s. 6d.,				Ridgway, the proceeds from a			
Two Kittens, 1s., Polly and				sale of fancy articles made			
Dolly, 1s., a Weasel, a Cow,				during the wet Christmas			
and Ugly Mugs, 2s. 6d.	0	8	0	holidays.	4	5	0
Fido	0	2	6	Mary and Emanuel Franghiadi	0	0	10
Ettie and Nelly	0	1	0	Bunny, 1s., Lily, 6d., May, 5s.	0	6	6
Herbert, Maude, and Florence	0	10	0	Collected by C. M. C., Miss G.,			
Agnes Mary Lockwood, Man-				2s. 6d., B. T. C., 2s. 6d.,			
chester	0	15	0	Mother, 1s., Maud, 6d.	0	6	6
Mary Blanche, Cambridge	0	5	0	Maude and Mildred	0	2	0
M. R. L. and E. K. L., Flint	0	8	6	School-room fines, from Moreton,			
Ada, 3d., Marie, 3d., Kitten, 3d.,				Dorchester	0	3	0
Minie, 3d.	0	1	0	In memory of little Emmy			
Lucy, Ethel, May, Fanny, Isabel				Preston	0	8	0
and Mamma, Ivy Lodge, Wel-				Madge, High Cross (collected).	0	1	10
lingborough	0	5	0	Edith, and "little Bruddy"	0	1	6
A. H. and H. H., York	0	10	0	Auntie, Benny, Kate, and Sarah,			
R. T. T. and ten others, Torquay	0	5	6	Brierley, Rochdale	0	4	0
Mrs. and Miss Rhodes, George				C. A. Beenan, Hartsheath, Mold,			
Street, Edinburgh	1	0	0	a scrap-book.			
"From the Scaramouches of				Gracie Beatrice and Ella Mil-			
Wanstead: 'Punch, 1d., Judy,				ford, a scrap-book for Toby,			
2d., Toots, 2d., Don Carlos,				and six pairs of mittens, and			
2d., Toby, 3d., Poddy, 2d.,				a shawl for general use.			
Pollywop, 1d., Shiver-de-				"Olly," Uckfield, some toys,			
freeze, 2d.	0	1	3	books, &c.			
Little May Gordon	0	15	6	The Baroness de Breidenbach,			
Little Nina	1	5	0	Torquay, some picture-books			
Miss F. Slaney, North Bridge,				with knitted work.			
Colchester	0	2	6	Laurie Minchin, two scrap-			
Cecil, 2s. 6d., Gwen, 2s. 6d.,				books.			
Mary, 1s., and Edith Beavan,				"Two big and six little W's,"			
1s.	0	7	0	Mortlake, Illustrated News,			
William Burnet Woodham	0	0	6	and book and toys.			
C. C. C. Latimer, Chesham	0	5	0	"Sphinx," two pictures for			
Constance Bee	0	5	0	Toby and Alexandrine.			
Frances	0	3	6	Maude, Edith, Rosa and Bertha,			
Chudda, Thudda, Bhudda and				warm clothing.			
Co., Marlborough	0	5	0	"Midge, with her love to			
Sphinx	0	2	6	Toby," a box full of beautiful			
Sally, Nep, Sphinx, Kitts, Dodo,				snowdrops.			
and Chip	0	1	9				








SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER IX.

A FAMILY HISTORY.

E are not really connected," Mrs. Buller began. "She is Margery's great-grandmother, and Margery and I are second cousins. That's all. But I knew her long ago, before my poor cousin Alice married Captain Vandaleur. And I have heard the whole story over and over again."

I have heard the story more than once also. I listened with open mouth to Aunt Theresa at this time, and often afterwards questioned her about my "ancestors," as I may almost call them.

Years later I used to repeat these histories to girls I was with. When we were on good terms they were interested to hear, as I was proud to tell, and would say, "Tell us about your ancestors, Margery." And if we fell out, there was no surer method of annoying me than to slight the memory of my great-great-grandparents.

I have told their story pretty often. I shall put it down here in my own way, for Aunt Theresa told a story rather disconnectedly.

The de Vandaleurs (we have dropped the *de* now) belong to an old French family. There was a Duke in it who was killed in the Revolution, and most of the family emigrated, and were very poor. The title was restored afterwards, and some of the property. It went to a cousin of the Duke who was murdered, he having no surviving children; but they say it went in the wrong line. The cousin who had remained in France, and always managed to keep the favour of the ruling powers, got the title, and remade his fortunes; the others remained in England, very poor, and very proud. They would not have accepted any favours from the new royal family, but still they considered themselves deprived of their rights. One of these Vandaleur *émigrés* (the one who ought to have been the Duke) had married his cousin. They suffered great hardships in their escape, I fancy, and on the birth of their son, shortly after their arrival in England, she died.

There was an old woman, Aunt Theresa said, who used to be her nurse when she was a child, in London, who had lived, as a girl, in the

wretched lodgings where these poor people were when they came over, and she used to tell her wonderful stories about them. How, in her delirium (she was insane for some little time before her son was born), Madame de Vandaleur fancied herself in her old home, "with all her finery about her," as Nurse Brown used to say.

Nurse Brown seems to have had very little sympathy with nervous diseases. She could understand a broken leg, or a fever, "when folks kept their beds;" but the disordered fancies of a brain tried just too far, the mad whims of a lady who could "go about," and who insisted upon going about, and changing her dress two or three times a day, and receiving imaginary visitors, and ordering her faithful nurse up and down under the names of half-a-dozen servants she no longer possessed, were beyond her comprehension.

Aunt Theresa said that she and her brothers and sisters had the deepest pity for the poor lady. They thought it so romantic that she should cry for fresh flowers and dress herself to meet the queen in a dirty little lodging at the back of Leicester Square, and they were always begging to hear "what else she did." But Nurse Brown seems to have been fondest of relating the smart speeches in which she endeavoured to "put sense into" the devoted servant who toiled to humour every whim of her unhappy mistress, instead of being "sharp with her," as Nurse Brown advised. Aunt Theresa had some doubts whether Mrs. Brown ever did make the speeches she reported; but when people say they said this or that, they often only mean that this or that is what they would have wished to have said.

"If she's mad, I says, shave her head, instead of dressing her hair all day long. I've knowed mad people as foamed at the mouth and rolled their eyes, and would have done themselves a injury but for a strait-jacket; and I've knowed folks in fevers unreasonable enough, but they kept their beds in a dark room, and didn't know their own mothers. Madame's ways is beyond me, I says. You calls it madness: I calls it temper. Tem—per, and no—thing else."

Aunt Theresa used to make us laugh by repeating Nurse Brown's sayings, and the little shake of herself with which she emphasized the last sentence.

If she had no sympathy for Madame de Vandaleur, she had a double share for the poor lady's husband: "a good soul," as she used to call him. It was in vain that Jeanette spoke of the sweet temper and

unselfishness of her mistress "before these terrible days," her conduct towards her husband then was "enough for" Nurse Brown, so she said. No sooner had the poor gentleman gone off on some errand for her pleasure than she called for him to be with her, and was only to be pacified by a fable of Jeanette's devising, who always said that "the king" had summoned Monsieur de Vandaleur. Jeanette was well aware that, the childless old Duke being dead, her master had succeeded to the title, and she often spoke of him as Monsieur le Duc to his wife, which seems to have pleased the poor lady. When he was absent, Jeanette's ready excuse, "*Eh, Madame! Poor Monsieur le Duc—le Roi l'a fait appeller,*" was enough, and she waited patiently for his return.

Ever-changing as her whims and fancies were, the poor gentleman sacrificed everything to gratify them. His watch, his rings, his buckles, the lace from his shirt, and all the few trifles secured in their hasty flight, were sold one by one. His face was familiar to the keepers of certain stalls near to where Covent Garden market now stands. He bought flowers for madame when he could not afford himself food. He sold his waistcoat, and buttoned his coat across him—and looked thinner than ever.

Then the day came when madame wished, and he could not gratify her wish. Everything was gone. He said, "This will kill me, Jeanette;" and Jeanette believed him.

Nurse Brown (according to her own account) assured Jeanette that it would not. "Folk doesn't die of such things, says I."

But in spite of common sense and experience, Monsieur de Vandaleur did die of grief, or something very like it, within twenty-four hours of the death of his wife, and the birth of their only son.

For some years the faithful Jeanette supported this child by her own industry. She was an exquisite laundress, and she thrived where the Duke and Duchess would have starved. As the boy grew up she kept him as far as possible from common companions, treated him with as much deference as if he had succeeded to the family honours, and filled his head with traditions of the deserts and dignity of the de Vandaleurs.

At last a cousin of Monsieur de Vandaleur found them out. He also was an exile, but he had prospered better, had got a small civil appointment, and had married a Scotch lady. It was after he had

come to the help of his young kinsman, I think, that an old French lady took a fancy to the boy, and sent him to school in France at her own expense. He was just nineteen when she died, and left him what little money she possessed. He then returned to England, and paid his respects to his cousin and the Scotch Mrs. Vandaleur.

She congratulated herself, I have heard, that her only child, a daughter, was from home when this visit was paid.

Mrs. Janet Vandaleur was a high-minded, hard-headed north-country woman. She valued long descent, and noble blood, and loyalty to a fallen dynasty like a Scotch woman, but, like a Scotch woman, she also respected capability and energy, and endurance. She combined a romantic heart with a practical head in a way peculiar to her nation. She knew the pedigree of every family (who had a pedigree) north of the Tweed, and was, probably, the best housekeeper in Great Britain. She devoutly believed her own husband to be as perfect as mortal man may be here below, whilst in some separate compartment of her brain she had the keenest sense of the defects and weaknesses which he inherited, and dreaded nothing more than to see her daughter mated with one of the helpless Vandaleurs.

This daughter, with much of her mother's strong will and practical capacity, had got her father's *physique* and a good deal of his artistic temperament. Dreading the development of *de Vandaleur* qualities in her, the mother made her education studiously practical and orderly. She had, like most Scotch matrons of her type, too good a gift for telling family stories, and too high a respect for ancestral traditions, to have quite kept herself from amusing her daughter's childhood with tales of the *de Vandaleur* greatness. But after her husband discovered his young relative, and as their daughter grew up, she purposely avoided the subject, which had, probably, the sole effect of increasing her daughter's interest in the family romance. Mrs. Janet knew the *de Vandaleur* pedigree as well as her own, and had shown a miniature of the late Duke in his youth to her daughter as a child on many occasions; when she had also alluded to the fact that the title by right was undoubtedly in the exiled branch of the family. Miss Vandaleur was not ignorant that the young gentleman who had just completed his education was, if every one had their rights, Monsieur le Duc; and she was as much disappointed to have missed seeing him as her mother was glad that they had not met.

For Bertrand Vandaleur had all the virtues and the weaknesses of his family in intense proportions. He had a hopeless ignorance of the value of money, which was his strongest condemnation before his Scotch cousin. He was high-minded, chivalrous, in some points accomplished, charming, and tender-hearted. But he was weak of will, merely passive in endurance, and quite without energy. He had a graceful, fanciful, but almost weak intellect. I mean, it just bordered on mental deficiency; and at times his dreamy eyes took a wildness that was said to make him painfully like his mother in her last days. He had an absurd but gracefully romantic idea of his family consequence. He was very handsome, and very like the miniature of the late Duke. It was most desirable that his cousin should not meet him, especially as she was of the romantic age of seventeen. So Mrs. Janet Vandaleur hastened their return from London to their small property in Scotland.

But there was no law to hinder Monsieur de Vandaleur from making a Scotch tour.

One summer's afternoon, when she had just finished the making of some preserves, Miss Vandaleur strolled down through a little wood behind the house towards a favourite beck that ran in a gorge below. She was singing an old French song in praise of the beauty of a fair lady of the de Vandaleurs of olden time. As she finished the first verse, a voice from a short distance took up the refrain—

“Victoire de Vandaleur! Victoire! Victoire!”

It was her own name as well as that of her ancestress, and she blushed as her eyes met those of a strange young gentleman, with a sketch-book in his hand, and a French poodle at his heels.

“Place aux dames!” said the stranger. On which the white poodle sat up, and his master bowed till his head nearly touched the ground.

They had met once as children, which was introduction enough in the circumstances. Here, at last, for Victoire, was the embodiment of all her dreams of the de Vandaleur race. He was personally so like the miniature, that he might have been the old Duke. He was the young one, as even her mother allowed. For him, he found a companion whose birth did not jar on his aristocratic prejudices, and whose strong character was bone and marrow to his weak one. Before they reached the house Mrs. Janet's precautions were vain.

She grew fond of the lad in spite of herself. The romantic side of her sympathised with his history. He was an orphan, and she had a mother's heart. In the direct line he was a Duke, and she was a Scotch woman. He freely consented to settle every penny he had upon his wife, and, as his mother-in-law justly remarked, "many a cannier man wouldn't just have done that."

In fine, they were married with not more than the usual difficulties beforehand.

He was nineteen and she was seventeen. They were my great-grandfather and great-grandmother.

CHAPTER X.

FAMILY HISTORY.—THE VINE.—ELSPETH.—MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER.

THEY had only one child—a son. They were very poor, and yet they gave him a good education. I ought to say, *she* gave him, for everything that needed effort or energy was done by my great-grandmother. The more it became evident that her Bertrand Vandaleur was less helpful and practical than any Bertrand de Vandaleur before him, the more there seems to have developed in her the purpose and capability inherited from Mrs. Janet. Like many another poor and ambitious mother, she studied Latin and Greek and algebra that she might teach her son. And at the same time she saved, even out of their small income. She began to "put by" from the boy's birth for his education, and when the time came he was sent to school.

My grandfather did well. I have heard that he inherited his father's beauty, and was not without his mother's sense and energy. He had the de Vandaleur quality of pleasing, with the weakness of being utterly ruled by the woman he loved. At twenty he married an heiress. His parents had themselves married too early to have reasonable ground for complaint at this; but when he left his own Church for that of his wife, there came a terrible breach between them and their only son. His mother soon forgave him; but the father was as immoveable in his displeasure as weak people can sometimes be. Happily, however, after the birth of a grandson peace was made, and the young husband brought his wife to visit his parents. The heiress had some property in the West Indies, which they proposed to visit, and they remained with the old people till just before they

sailed. It was as a keepsake at parting that my grandfather had restored to his mother the watch which she gave to me. The child was left in England with his mother's relations.

My grandfather and grandmother never returned. They were among the countless victims of the most cruel of all seas. The vessel they went out in was lost during a week of storms. On what day or night, and in what part of the Atlantic, no one survived to tell.

Their orphan child was my dear father. He was brought up chiefly by his mother's relations. The religious question was always a difficulty as regarded the *de Vandaleurs*, and, I fancy, extended to my own case. My guardians were not my great-grandparents, but Major Buller, and Mr. Arkwright, a clergyman of the Church of England. My great-grandfather and grandmother were Roman Catholics.

Circumstances combined for some little time to hinder me from visiting my great-grandmother.

The little Bullers and I had the measles, and when we were all convalescent, Major Buller got two months' leave, and we went away for change of air. Then small-pox prevailed in *Riflebury*, and we were kept away, even after Major Buller returned to his duties. When we did return, before a visit to the *Vandaleurs* could be arranged, Adolphe fell ill of scarlet fever, and the fear of infection postponed my visit for some time.

I was eight years old when I went to stay at "The Vine." This was the name of the little cottage where my great-grandparents lived—so called because of an old vine which covered the south wall on one side of the porch, and crept over a framework upon the roof. I do not now remember how many pounds of grapes it had been known to produce in one season, and yet I ought not to have forgotten, for it was a subject on which my great-grandfather, my great-grandmother, Adolphe, and Elspeth constantly boasted.

"And if they don't just ripen as the master says they do in France, it's all for the best," said Elspeth; "for ripe grapes would be picked all along, and the house not a penny the better for them. But green grape tarts and cream are just eating for a king."

Elspeth was "general servant" at my great-grandmother's. Her aunt Mary had come from Scotland to serve "Miss Victoire" when she first married. As her health failed, and she grew old, her young niece

was sent for to work under her. Old Mary died with her hands in my great-grandmother's, and Elspeth reigned in her stead.

Elspeth was an elderly woman when I first made her acquaintance. She had a broad, bright, sensible face, and a kindly smile that won me to her. She wore frilled caps, tied under her chin; and as to exchanging them for "the fly-away bits of things servants stick on their heads at the present time," Elspeth would as soon have thought of abandoning the faith of her fathers. She was a strict, but not bitter Presbyterian. She was not tall, and she was very broad; her apparent width being increased by the very broad linen collars which spread, almost like a cape, over her ample shoulders.

My great-grandmother had an anecdote of me connected with this, which she was fond of relating.

"And what do you think of Elspeth, little one?" she had said to me on the first evening of my visit.

"I think she's very big," was my reply.

"Certainly, our good Elspeth is as wide as she is tall," said my great-grandfather, laughing.

I wondered if this were so; and when my great-grandmother gave me a little yard measure in a wooden castle, which had taken my fancy among the treasures of her workbox, the idea seized me of measuring Elspeth for my own satisfaction on the point. But the silken measure slipped, and caught on the battlements of the castle, and I lost my place in counting the figures, and at last was fain to ask Elspeth herself.

"How tall are you, Elspeth, please? As much as a yard?"

"Ou aye, my dear," said Elspeth, who was deeply engaged in darning a very large hole in one of my great-grandfather's socks.

"As much as two yards?" I inquired.

"Eh, no, my dearie," said Elspeth. "That wad be six feet; and I'm not just that tall, though my father was six feet and six inches."

"How broad are you, Elspeth, please?" I persisted. "As much as a yard?"

"I'm thinking I will be, my dear," said Elspeth, "for it takes the full width of a coloured cotton to cut me a dress-front, and then it's not over big."

"Are you as broad as two yards, do you think?" I said, drawing my ribbon to its full length from the castle, and considering the question.

Elspeth shook her head. She was biting the end off a piece of darning cotton ; but I rightly concluded that she would not confess to being two yards wide.

"Please, I have measured Elspeth," I announced over the table, "and grandpapa is quite right."

"Eh?" said Mr. Vandaleur, who had a trick of requiring observations to be repeated to him by his wife.

"She says that she has measured Elspeth, and that you are right," said my great-grandmother. "But about what is grandpapa right, my little one?"

"Grandpapa said that Elspeth was as wide as she was tall," I explained. "And so she is, for I measured her—at least, the ribbon would slip when I measured her, so I asked her; and she's a yard tall, but not as much as two yards; and a yard wide, but not as much as two yards. And so grandpapa is right."

Some of the happiest hours I spent at The Vine were spent in Elspeth's company. I made tiny cakes, and tarts of curious shapes, when she was busy pastry-making, and did some clear-starching on my doll's account when Elspeth was "getting-up" my great-grandfather's cravats.

Elspeth had strong old-fashioned notions of paying respect where it was due. She gave Adolphe a sharp lecture one day for some lack of respect in his manner to "Miss Margery;" and, on the other hand, she taught me to courtesy at the door when I entered the room where I breakfasted with Mr. and Mrs. Vandaleur.

Some dancing lessons that I had had in Rislebury helped me here, and Elspeth was well satisfied with my performance. I felt very shy and awkward the first time that I made my morning courtesy, my knees shaking under me, and Elspeth watching from the passage; but my great-grandfather and mother seemed to take it as a matter of course, and I soon became quite used to it. If Mr. Vandaleur happened to be standing in the room, he always returned my courtesy by a low bow.

I became very fond of my great-grandfather. He was a tall, handsome old man, with high shoulders, slightly bent by age and also by habit. He wore a blue coat with brass buttons, that had been very well made a very long time ago; white trousers, a light waistcoat, a frilled shirt, and a very stiff cravat. On the wall of the drawing-

room there hung a water-colour portrait of a very young and very handsome man, with longish wavy hair, features refined to weakness, dreamy, languid eyes, and a coat the very image of my great-grandfather's. The picture hung near the door; and as Mr. Bertrand Vandaleur passed in or out, I well remember that he almost always glanced at the sketch, as people glance at themselves in passing a mirror.

I was too young then to notice this as being a proof that the drawing was a portrait of himself; but I remember being much struck by the likeness between the coat in the picture and that my great-grandfather wore, and also by the way that the hair was thrown back from the high, narrow forehead, just as my great-grandfather's grey hairs were combed away from his brow. Children are great admirers of beauty, too, especially, I think, of an effeminate style of good looks, and are very susceptible to the power of expression in faces. I had a romantic admiration for "the handsome man by the door," and his eyes haunted me about the room.

I was kneeling on a chair and examining the sketch one morning, when my great-grandfather came up to me. "Who is it, little one?" said he.

I looked at the picture. I looked at my great-grandfather's coat. As his eyes gazed steadily into mine, there was a likeness there also; but it was the coat that decided me. I said, "It is you, grandpapa."

I think this little incident just sealed our friendship. I always remained in high favour with my great-grandfather. He spent a great deal of his time in painting. He never had, I believe, had any profession. The very small income on which he and his wife had lived was their own private fortune. I often think it must have been a great trial to a woman of my great-grandmother's energy, that her husband should have made no effort to add to their resources by work of some kind. But then I cannot think of any profession that would have suited him. He was sadly wanting in general capacity, though accomplished much above the average, and with a fine knack in the budding of roses.

I thought him the grandest gentleman that ever lived, and the pleasantest of companions. His weak but loveable nature had strong sympathy with children, I think. I ought to say, with a child, for he would share the fancies and humours of one child companion for hours, but was quite incapable of managing a larger number—as,

indeed, he was of any kind of domestic administration or control. Mrs. Vandaleur was emphatically Elspeth's mistress, if she was also her friend; but in the absence of "the mistress" Elspeth ruled "the master" with a rod of iron.

I quickly gained a certain power over him myself. I discovered that if I maintained certain outward forms of respect and courtesy, so as not to shock my grandpapa's standard of good manners, I might make almost any demands on his patience and good nature. Children and pet animals make such discoveries very quickly, and are apt to use their power somewhat tyrannically. I fear I was no exception to the rule.

(To be continued.)

THE SUN-DIAL.

TEMPUS FUGIT UT UMBRA.*



REST, stranger, on thy way,
The sun declines;
Afar the western bay
With crimson shines.

By faith my motto read,
I tell to all—
Life's years do swiftly speed,
As shadows fall.
My face upturn'd to God,
Reflects His will;
I mark the moments trod
For good or ill.
My shadow on the stone
Doth not deceive;
I walk by Light alone,
From dawn to eve.
And when the night descends
The mountain steep,
My day of labour ends
In peaceful sleep.
So they, whose life is run,
Find rest at last;
Their earthly duties done,
Their shadow past.

LL.B.

* The motto of the dial on the porch of Bradfield Church, Yorkshire.

LOST AND FOUND.

*By the Author of "On the Edge of the Storm," "Sydonie's Dowry,"
etc. etc.*



THE dawn was creeping chill and pearly up the sky, but no one was yet stirring in the little village of Blesle, and even the bees were still asleep in their hives. A sweet perfume was breathed from a tuft of stocks in the curé's garden, but there were breaches in the hawthorn hedge, its elder-trees were crushed and broken, the ground was trampled, and the door wrenched off its hinges, and on the hill-sides blackened walls, around which smoke still curled, alone showed where two days before had stood the Château de Courcelles. Blesle seemed now as peaceful as if no angry passions had ever convulsed it. The inhabitants had done their worst, and were perhaps startled by their own success. They would require fresh excitement soon, and it was well for Mère Morand, who had been foster-mother to the Comte de Courcelles, that she was known to be dying. No one was inclined to show dangerous sympathy towards Mère Morand, who was known to be more of an aristocrat than the nobles themselves, and she had remained unmolested up to this time solely because her daughter Suzanne was the promised wife of Romain Duroc. There had been a time when Duroc's opinions were highly unpopular, but all of a sudden the villagers discovered that he had been in the right all along, and he had become a conspicuous man in Blesle. Since the burning of the château he had entered Mère Morand's house but for a few moments, and had any one seen his face when he left it, they might have guessed that the interview had been stormy.

Since then Suzanne had watched alone by her mother's bed; no one had seen her outside the house, and no one had sought her. The end of Mère Morand's life was very near as the autumn morning broke: Suzanne, leaning over her, could with difficulty distinguish murmured words, showing that her mind was wandering. "We have always served the Courcelles," whispered the dying woman, with a certain pride. "Father and son: tell M. le Comte I go to pray for him in Paradise. No, Romain, I have always liked you, my poor

fellow, but Suzanne cannot marry any one who speaks against the nobles. Well, well, I consent then; do not cry, Suzanne"—her daughter's tears were falling on her face. "There, I have consented—tell M. le Curé so. Fetch him, Suzanne; I—I think I am dying." The Curé of Blesle was a de Courcelles. No one in France deplored the condition of the lower classes and the exactions of the nobles more than he, and he had accepted this humble post in the deep and silent desire to atone, as far as he could, for the sins of his class against their poor brethren. But his long, good life amongst them had not availed him in this evil day, and flight alone had saved him from arrest, perhaps death. Suzanne wrung her hands as her mother, with clearer comprehension of her state, repeated her entreaty for his presence; but as if it had summoned the old man, who had never yet failed any of his flock who needed him, the soft well-known voice answered at the door, "I am here, my daughter, peace be with you."

He had entered unperceived, dusty, weary, with an urgent message, which he had risked his life to bring; but even more pressing need was here, and Suzanne saw a look of relief come over the distressed face of the dying woman, and her lips moved for a moment or two, as if following the prayers which the priest began at once to repeat. Before they were ended, she had ceased to breathe. He rose from his knees, gazed at her with a sort of sad envy, and then laying his hand on Suzanne's head, said, "My child, I have work for you."

"I have none here now," she answered, lifting a haggard face.

"Do you know that my nephew—your foster-brother—has been arrested?"

"Where?" she uttered, like a cry of pain.

"At Villeneuve. Little Marie is with him. There is no hope for a Courcelles in these days. Listen, my daughter; you will find some way of saving the child? Go to Villeneuve; try to see him; propose to take her to her great-aunt at Château Plouzat. I learn that she is still unmolested."

"Yes, yes, M. le Curé, I will go. My mother would bid me go."

"At once then," said the old priest, with sad significance.

"Yes, mon père, yes," she answered, hurriedly, passing her hand over her forehead, as if to clear her thoughts.

"And Romain?" said the curé, inquiringly.

"Romain can be nothing to me now!" she cried out, vehemently,

turning very pale. "My mother was always against it; only her love for me, her love for the boy to whom she had been good because he had neither parents nor friends made her ever consent. Long ago, even when others were peaceable, he——"



"Ah, yes, long ago; he is the only man in the place who has acted on conviction; the bitterest, yet the only one whom I could trust," murmured the old priest; but Suzanne hurried on unheeding.

"And now—now—with our seigneur in danger, our king in prison,

you, M. le Curé, a fugitive, he leads the assault on the château; he is foremost in denouncing all priests, though he knew—he knew that I told him I would never marry an enemy of the de Courcelles. It killed my mother that he, my fiancé——”

“Hush,” said the priest, hastily, as a sound of steps and voices rose up in the hitherto silent street. “I did wrong to come, I have brought danger with me. I may have been tracked. Nay, it is impossible to hide me,” as Suzanne, with urgent gestures, threw open a narrow, dark cupboard behind the bed where lay the dead woman, unutterably far already from the anguish and danger around her. “Well, as you will; but if they make inquiries, I expressly forbid you to tell a falsehood; an old man’s life is not worth a lie.”

A peremptory knocking at the door left no time for reply. It had been fastened when the curé had entered. Suzanne threw it open. A party of *gardes nationales* stood there and a police officer, who gruffly asked, “Why do you keep us waiting, since you are up and dressed? How come you to be up so early?”

“But, citizens, it seems to me that I might rather ask that of you.”

“We seek Antoine Courcelles, refractory priest,” said the spokesman. “We know that all in this village are good patriots, except yourself and your mother, and since he is known to have come in this direction——”

“You can seek,” she answered, moving aside, but her heart gave a wild indignant bound, as the voice of a new comer exclaimed, “Let me enter, citizens; I know every corner of the house, and you can trust me, eh?” and Romain Duroc pushed by, but starting back, exclaimed, with irrepressible concern, “Ah, the old woman is dead!” All stood taken by surprise, with a sudden sense that an awful presence was among them; but the awe was only momentary, and it was another feeling which made the leader shrink back whispering to Romain, “Of what did the old hag die?”

“Doubtless of small-pox; it has raged in the village.”

“Small-pox!” repeated the man, paler than before. “Small-pox in the village! Vile aristocrat that thou art, why didst thou not warn me? Are the lives of good patriots to be risked in searching for base calotins, who, after all, are not here?” as Romain stepped out, making a sign that he had sought in vain, and then, piqued by the ill-suppressed laughter of his subordinates, who were well aware of his

terrors, he added, "I have reason to believe that the man we want went towards St. Servain. Lose no time, patriots, follow me; and thou, citizen," to Romain, who was evidently an old acquaintance, "show me the most direct road." Suzanne had stood with eyes blazing with anger by the bedside. "You heard?" she gasped out, as the steps died away, and the curé emerged pale and much moved from his hiding-place.

"Alas! Heaven forgive him; I thought I could trust him," he replied.

It was still so early that hardly any one was astir. The curé quitted the house, to which he had brought both comfort and peril, and went forth to seek a safer refuge.

The burial of Mère Morand was the first which took place in Blesle without any religious rites, and there was a certain savage satisfaction shown that she, devoted, as every one knew, to the nobles and priests, should be thus laid in the grave, while the château overhead had hardly ceased to smoke. Romain Duroc was not present; he had proved so ardent and ready, though unsuccessful, a guide that he had been detained to lead the search in another direction.

Suzanne's one longing was to begin her journey to Villeneuve; but the necessary papers were not easily come by. The maire, from whom she had to obtain a permit to leave Blesle, had been an old friend—when the Morands had friends—but his new-blown authority was dear to him, and he was, besides, full of inconvenient curiosity, and when, at last, she hoped that he was about to sign her passport, he shook his head, saying, "You must come again. I have lost my spectacles, and it is impossible for me to write. Ah, it is not every one who has gold spectacles. Go, go, you waste my time—my time is precious."

A light broke on Suzanne's mind at the significant tone. She began to see whither all the objections raised had been tending.

"Alas, citizen, my poor mother has no further need of hers."

"A beautiful pair. I recollect them. The comte—hem!—the ci-devant comte, I mean, gave them to her a couple of years ago."

"Just so, and if I might be permitted to offer them to you?"

"I accept them for the service of the nation," replied the public functionary, adjusting his scarf with dignity. Even when the long coveted glasses were on his nose, however, he hesitated still. The

permit was signed, but he kept his hand on it. "Remember that as soon as you arrive in Villeneuve you go straight to the commissary of police, and ask leave to inhabit the town."

"I understand, citizen."

"Then you will give your address, that the police may readily find you in case of necessity."

"I comprehend perfectly."

"Stay, what are you in such a hurry for? Do you know what you must do after that? Why, appear at your section, and explain why you have come, and what your means of subsistence are."

"But since I shall probably remain but a single night!"

"That has nothing to do with it. It is the business of the state to look after its children. Then you will swear that you abhor all tyrants?"

"With all my heart" said Suzanne, very emphatically.

"Good," said the mayor, "and then"—laying his finger impressively along his red nose—"when you have found your lodging, you will write your name on a ticket, and put it outside your door. And——"

But here some one entered, and with a sudden thought that something might leak out concerning his acquisition of a new pair of spectacles, the mayor dismissed Suzanne in haste.

Suzanne looked up her cottage, and carried off only a small bundle of clothes. It was reported in Bleule that she had gone to secure a legacy, and as such indeed did she look on the unprotected little child whom she went to seek. No one concerned himself about her absence, unless it might be Romain Duroc, who passed her cottage with lingering steps every day, but never saw any token that its mistress had returned.

To the sturdy peasant girl, though her heart was very heavy, and she had been nursing her mother day and night, the journey was no formidable undertaking. She had a little money, which paid for food and lodging when night forced her to pause, and daybreak always found her again on her way, spurred by the terrible fear of arriving too late to see the young noble, who had spent the first years of his life under her mother's roof, and been ever since to her as a kind and dear brother. She kept as far from all habitations as possible, not knowing where some comité de sûreté publique might not be sitting, which would possibly arrest her as conducive to the

general welfare, but everywhere were tokens of disorder, terror, and poverty. Once or twice she passed some one whom instinct told her had, like herself, good reason for avoiding notice, but as for Suzanne, being really the peasant girl whom she seemed was her best passport, and she entered Villeneuve without difficulty. Wishing to ask as few questions as possible, she walked slowly between the gloomy brick houses, wondering how to find out where the Comte de Courcelles was confined, when she saw, for the first time, something which made her heart leap, and then stand still. A group of eager speakers below it were discussing who would be its victims on the morrow; she heard the name of Courcelles among them. There were men and women, and even children, engaged in this talk, and they seemed looking forward as to a fête; but on the whole Villeneuve seemed dumbly oppressed and gloomy; there was no stir in the streets, no one looked from the windows or stood at the doors; every one but the ruling party wished to escape notice and be forgotten.

Suzanne turned into another street, sick at heart, and soon had no need to ask where the prison was, for around the doors of a desecrated church stood a crowd of women, pushing, shrieking, trampling on one another, as they sought, often in vain, to enforce permits of admission, or pass in baskets of provisions. Many were of the lowest rank, for humble birth was no protection now, and they had relatives in the prison, or possibly were servants, faithful to unhappy masters; but amongst them were many faces which, under the poor disguise of a common dress, betrayed gentle birth. Suzanne spoke to a slender girl, whom she had seen repeatedly hustled aside by the crowd. "They will not let me go in," she answered, sobbing. "I have food for my sister, and the turnkey ate it, and laughed at me, saying, 'It did not matter, since in a few hours——'" Tears choked her.

"Are the prisoners permitted to receive food?" asked Suzanne, eagerly; and on learning that it was possible to bribe the turnkeys, she hastened in search of a shop where she might buy provisions. It was easier for her to make her way to the doors when she returned than for the slender child, to whom a crowd was a new and terrible experience, and a whisper of an assignat of twenty francs gained her admittance. In other cases, a prisoner was called to the wicket to be spoken with, but from the condemned cell there was no issue except to death. Suzanne had no permit, but the numbers crowded

into the prison allowed great irregularities, when they were profitable to the jailors; there was a constant passing to and fro, and permits were not always asked for. As Suzanne hurried by, she saw at least half-a-dozen prisoners standing before the bureau of the *greffier*, whose business it was to write down the names and crimes of the accused. No notice was taken of her, and the turnkey who guided her suddenly stopped before a side chapel, through whose grating she could see her foster-brother, sitting on one of the mattresses thrown down on the floor, with a little child nestling in his arms, his face laid against the little fair head. Here the condemned passed the last hours of their lives: it had several other tenants, but Suzanne had eyes for only that one. A faint twilight fell from a window overhead, and the air was so heavy and fetid that the single candle could hardly burn in it. At the sound of his name, the young noble looked up with a start, and rose, still holding in his arms the motherless child, fears for whom were his worst torment. To whom was he to leave her? To his jailors, or to companions, who probably would only leave the prison like himself, to die? The little one understood that her father was sad, and there was a scared look in her eyes as she clung to him; but she recognized Suzanne, whom she had found an unwearied playfellow some months before at Blesle, and called out her name in delight, which had to be promptly hushed. Only a stifled greeting, a few hurried words of life and death were possible between the foster-brother and sister; but a light of unspeakable thankfulness shone in the young man's eyes as he turned away, after holding up his child to kiss Suzanne through the grating; his own fate seemed nothing to him now that he felt assured that Suzanne would place his little Marie in safety.

"Listen, my little one," he whispered, sitting down in his old place, and kissing her fair hair tenderly. "To-morrow papa goes on a long journey—he cannot take thee."

"Why not? Do you not want your little girl, papa?" asked the reproachful voice.

"No, not to-morrow," answered the poor father. "Thou must slip out into the street when I go, quietly, quietly, so that no one may notice thee—dost thou understand? and Suzanne will be near, and take thee away. Thou hast asked me so often to take thee out, and let thee play with other children."

The suppressed sob in his voice seemed to strike her more than what he said. "And when will you come back, my papa?" she asked, wistfully.

"I do not know, my darling."

"Are you going to mamma?" was the next question, totally unexpected, since she could not have remembered her mother, and had never before named her to him.

"I—I hope so."

"Then I wish I might go too," and even while he reiterated his directions and sought to impress them on her mind, he felt as if to take the orphan child with him to the grave would indeed be best and happiest.

In the last week Suzanne had seen her mother die, her lover betray her, and her foster-brother under sentence of death. When she got outside of the prison, she dropped on a door-step, in dull, stupefied misery. Sometimes she felt sure she was in a dream from which she should wake; sometimes a sharp pang stung her into consciousness; now and then merciful torpor stole over her. The town grew entirely silent, a chill night wind blew, but she still sat leaning unobserved against the door, and every time the great clock overhead struck she shivered, thinking, "he has an hour less to live;" and yet she felt a fierce impatience for this endless night to be gone. Darkness came, intensified rather than lessened by the dull light in a great red lamp swinging above her head from an iron bar. With the waking stir of morning she roused herself; little Marie would need food on her journey to Plouzat, where lived the only Courcelles not in flight nor arrested; an elderly lady of whom Suzanne only knew what she had heard from the old curé, that her steward had unlimited influence over her, and, though a republican, had as yet faithfully protected her and her property. Suzanne rose wearily, and went back to the shop where she had bought food the evening before. She fancied that curious looks were bent on her, and the sense of danger roused her more fully; her life was precious for Marie's sake. She feared to attract attention by another attempt to see the Comte de Courcelles, and returned to her shelter under the archway, watching every one who went and came near the prison, lest among them should be the little Marie. There was the same stir round the doors as yesterday, and somewhat more in the streets, as the usual hour for the executions

approached; she heard a voice singing, "Il faut du sang, du sang, du sang à la République," and a buzz of voices in the direction of the guillotine, but evidently the first fierce exultation had cooled, the common danger was too great, and too much blood had been shed not to have diminished the first savage triumph of the populace, and some of the spectators were present chiefly because they feared to stay away. But the terror-stricken acquiescence in slaughter was complete, and the change of feeling, such as it was, gave no hope for the prisoners. A deep murmur from the gathering crowd round the prison gave notice that the time was at hand. An escort of gendarmes gathered round a sort of cart, and shouts and ribald insults broke out as two women were put into it. One looked up with mute appeal, and the colour flew up into her face; the other seemed not to hear, and was absorbed in prayer. Suzanne looked eagerly on; a man appeared—she had seen without noticing him in the condemned cell; another, not the one whom she sought,—and just then she started to feel her dress pulled, while a child's voice whispered, "Papa sent me out; I saw you directly, and he is coming, but we are not to wait for him."

"I understand," said poor Suzanne.

No one had paid any attention to the child; she had slipped out unquestioned when the condemned cell was opened. Suzanne lifted her up, knowing that they must not linger, yet yearning to give her foster-brother the comfort of knowing Marie in her hands. "Papa, my papa!" cried the little one, as her father came out in his turn. He heard, and looked round with a face of pale anguish, which haunted Suzanne's dreams for nights after, but it flashed into absolute joy as he saw his child in her arms. "Where is he going? why does he not come to us?" asked Marie, trying to get down and run to him.

"He said we were not to wait, my little one. This way—come then! we must do as M. le Comte bids us."

"Papa has to do as *they* tell him," said Marie, signing towards the prison, and submitting reluctantly to be led away; "but he says we are not going to be there any more. Are we going to Courcelles?"

"No, not to Courcelles," said Suzanne, choking back her sobs, both for the child's sake and because tears might be seen and denounced by some passer-by. "First we shall go out of the town, and then we shall have our breakfast in the fields; you will like that?"

The shouts in the Place pursued them; Suzanne dreaded lest the child should gather their meaning; dreaded too lest any air of hurry or distress should attract attention. At the gates of the town a large low waggon was going out, with several men and a woman walking beside it; unnoticed, Suzanne lifted the amused Marie in behind, and walked after it as if she belonged to the party. The woman alone saw, and feigned not to observe; they passed out unquestioned.

It was a long way to Château Plouzat; they slept in a deserted outbuilding, and journeyed on the next day through country ever growing more wild and rocky. After the confinement of nearly a month within a prison, the child seemed scared by the lonely way and open space, and "When will papa come?" was her constant question. Château Plouzat was in one of the wildest districts of France; the road, such as it was, passed through deep rocky glens, where a dense tangle of brushwood and fern almost concealed the rushing stream beneath. The château stood in a little wooded valley, at the world's end, as it seemed to Suzanne. It was rather a manor house than a castle, with a steep roof, a little tower at each end, and large substantial outbuildings round its yard. A chestnut wood clothed the slope above it; the valley was green and still. There seemed assurance of peace and safety in its very aspect, and Suzanne quickened her steps, then put Marie down, smoothed her hair, and arranged the poor little shabby frock—ragged in spite of her father's fond, unskilful care.

"A de Courcelles every inch of her," thought Suzanne, proudly, looking at the fair skin, the deep blue eyes and pencilled eyebrows, darker than the hair. "How glad, how proud her aunt will be!" She led her into the farm-yard, looking anxiously round.

"Is papa here?" Marie asked, glancing timidly at the servants, who ceased their work to look at her. Suzanne did not answer; she had perceived the mistress of the château standing in the doorway, with all the cocks and hens of the establishment at her feet, and her head turned over her shoulder to scold some delinquent man or maid in the background with heartiness, which showed that the reign of liberty and equality had not reached Château Plouzat. "Take me away; I do not like her!" whispered Marie, as the old lady suddenly looked towards them, and stood staring in wonder, her gold snuff-box in one hand, and her cane pointed straight at them.

"Madame," began Suzanne.

"Who are you? what brings you here? who is that little beggar?" interrupted Mademoiselle de Courcelles, her voice rising in shrillness with every word, and her eyebrows growing arched and bristling.

"I have brought madame her grand-niece, Mademoiselle Marie."

"What! what! who are you, child?"

"Marie de Courcelles, citoyenne," lisped the frightened child.

"*Citoyenne!*" screamed the old lady. "*Citoyenne!* does the child take me for a bourgeoisie? She's an impostor, she's no Courcelles; you are both impostors! My nephew never sent you here to insult me!"

"Alas, Madame, M. le Comte," began Suzanne, with a look and tone which only seemed to complete the exasperation of Mademoiselle de Courcelles.

"It's a lie! I won't hear it!" she screamed, dropping her snuff-box, and threatening them with her cane. "Antoine! Jean! Noémi, drive them off the premises. They are impostors. I won't hear a word. I won't be told—hold your tongue, girl! She will bring us ill luck with her bad news. Drive them off, I say. *Citoyenne*, indeed!" and with the laughing servants making a feint of advancing upon her, enjoying their mistress's fury, Suzanne could but give up the attempt to make herself heard, and retreat with the weeping Marie, while in the distance they still heard Mademoiselle de Courcelles stamping her high-heeled shoes on the pavement, and vituperating "those vagabonds" and her intendant, who never was in the way when she wanted him.

Suzanne stood outside the courtyard in dire perplexity. Presently a good-looking young fellow, in a blue round frock, and trousers, and broad hat, came out to see if she were there still. "Ah! ah! you caught it finely," he laughed; "what brought you here? A message? From whom? Ah, I know; we have heard up here what is going on," he added, with a wish, Suzanne suspected, to lead her on. "The intendant keeps things straight here; he is an honest man, and does not wish our mistress to be shaved by the national razor, so he answers for her patriotism, ha! ha! and no one molests her. A good woman, see you, after all, and none of us would like harm to come to her. She will hear no news, and makes believe that nothing disagreeable happens. Bah! it is a harmless fancy." He stopped and looked at them.

"Is this thy mother, little heart?" he asked abruptly of Marie.

"No, monsieur," she murmured, recalling the lesson just received; "my nurse."

"Ah, ah, I see. *Monsieur*, eh? Where is thy father, little one?"

"He went away in a cart to-day," and tears began to fall. "He went a long journey."

"Poor little angel!" with an expressive sign to Suzanne. "I understand. Where are you going to-night?"

"I do not know," answered Suzanne, looking over the valley, which now was filled with a white sea of dense mist, above which a village spire was just visible. She felt as if hope, strength, and money had failed her.

"That is a pretty little blue-eyed creature," said the man, with the tenderness which a Frenchman so readily shows to children. "It is a pity that mademoiselle would not keep her, and she sticks to what she has once said, she does! My mother has a farm half a league off, up the valley; she would take you in for a night or two; you are a nice-looking lass; besides, this little one must not sleep under the stars. Come, but be silent when we approach the house; my father is an excellent man, only, when tipsy, sometimes not—all one could wish. Wilt come to me, little one? That is right," and Suzanne was completely reassured by the genuine pleasure which he showed at Marie's ready trust; she had been more used to a man's care than a woman's of late, poor child, and perched on his shoulder, she suddenly lost her scared timidity, and chattered as if to an old friend. She had made many conquests in the prison, where her fair little face had looked touchingly innocent and out of place, and now Jean Crocq appeared amusingly delighted and flattered by her confidence, and turned with pleased looks on Suzanne, whose face had retained its honest comeliness though sad and pale. "You come from far," he said, observing her costume, which, though she had as much as possible effaced all distinctive marks from it, was still sufficiently unlike the grey and black woollen dresses and peculiar caps of that district to betray her. "You do not speak like us. No matter; you can tell my mother as much or as little as you like. Here we are."

He opened a stable door so softly that none of the occupants within perceived it, and stood enjoying Suzanne's surprise. The cows were all in the fields at this season, and Mère Crocq had appropriated the

stable to a new purpose. One of those triangular lamps called *kalens* by the peasantry hung overhead, and lighted a party of women, old and young, who sat on heaps of straw, spinning or knitting, while Mère Crocq, the only one who had a chair, was reading aloud the life of some saint. Jean whispered an explanation. "She has been well taught, my mother, and she is a right good woman. Our curé is a *jureur*, more shame for the rascal, and people like her would as soon hear the evil one say mass as he, so all of her way of thinking come quietly here of an evening, and end with a prayer or two. Mother!" signing to Suzanne to move out of sight. Every one started and looked round; Mère Crocq came forth, and a brief explanation was given. "I've found you a maid instead of Driette!" said Jean, and as this was far from the first time that fugitives had been sheltered by her, Mère Crocq required no further hint. She had the same kind, sun-browned face as her son.

Suzanne felt that she was safe with them, but she started a little at the growl with which Père Crocq received them in the kitchen. He blew such clouds out of his pipe that his face could not be seen while his wife spoke to him, but made no active objection beyond muttering, "You will not be satisfied till we are all looking out of the *little window*," i.e., the guillotine, which had innumerable names.

Suzanne had looked on this as only a break in her journey, but when the pitying Mère Crocq suggested that she should for a time remain as her servant, the relief was great. To Blesle, where Romain was, she neither could nor would return. As the new maid, Suzanne remained, and was sent to the mayor with a present of a cheese, to satisfy him of her patriotism; Père Crocq did not interfere; he was only dangerous in the talkative stage of tipsiness, or when out of humour after a drinking bout, and though he did not like his wife's views, had a certain wholesome awe of her which kept him in order.

In the healthy farm life little Marie grew stronger and blither than she would ever have done in a château. No one would have recognised the fragile child whom Suzanne had brought to Château Plouzat in the merry little girl who made friends with every living thing about the place. With a child's acquiescence in the present she either forgot her father or ceased to expect his coming, and Suzanne did not dare to keep up any recollection of him in her mind lest she should make dangerous remarks before village patriots, for even here the utmost

caution was necessary, though Plouzat never fell into such mad excesses as characterized many places. Yet even here were arrests, persecutions, and entire suppression of worship. Well was it for Marie to grow up in the honest, godly home of Mère Crocq. Jean, her devoted slave, often fetched her to spend the day under his care at Château Plouzat, where she trotted about after him, attracting a certain silent notice from its mistress, though after one sharp, "Whose child is that?" and Jean's cool reply, "A little friend of mine, madame," she asked no more; only if several days passed without Marie's coming, she would say, gruffly, "Anything wrong with that child?" Marie showed no great liking for the hot-tempered old lady, but sometimes mentioned that she had given her fruit or cakes. Suzanne thought that Mademoiselle de Courcelles might be secretly afraid of her intendant's discovering that she had an heir to estates which he possibly hoped to obtain at her death.

In these long, slow days, which gradually counted up into years, Suzanne had full time to look that trouble in the face which had at first been thrust aside by the need of action. While she seemed fully occupied with her work, or Marie, that grief ever grew keener which had begun when the man she loved became a popular leader instead of being almost persecuted. Once, no one but Romain had dared say in Blesle that the poor were ground down by the nobles, or that the nobles had lost their title to universal respect. Suzanne and her mother had been startled, but he was their Romain, and they condoned it. But when he attained popularity, when the good curé, ever kind to him, fled for his life; when the château was burned, and the church profaned, it seemed to Suzanne that her lover was siding with darkness against light—a traitor to the good cause; and in passionate indignation she broke off their betrothal. By what treachery he had revenged himself! It was no thanks to him that the old priest, who had comforted her mother's last moments, had not been arrested—nay, she too, as having sheltered him. It was not her wasted love which the girl deplored, though it had grown up with her, and to lose it had wrenched her heart in two, nor the youth which seemed withered within her, but being forced to feel Romain unworthy. She hardly thought of herself at all, so much did she think of him; and her first hot anger gave way to unutterable heart-sickness, and prayers that he might repent. She hardly put her

feelings into words, even to herself, never to others, as she went about her work very silently, but sometimes saying to herself, "After all, if he had not cost me so much, I should never have prayed so for him."

The tragedy of France was gradually played out, but the last heavings of the sea of revolution were very slow to cease, and it was long before any real sense of safety returned to the miserable land. Even after Robespierre's fall, danger and disquiet prevailed, and fresh accessions of revolutionary fury scared away confidence. Emigrés were long in the utmost danger if they ventured back, wealth or conscience were still most dangerous possessions, yet at last order and rule revived. Under Napoleon's rule churches were gradually opened, and such priests as had survived their sufferings on board "*Les deux associés*" were set at liberty. Many and many a time had Suzanne wondered if the curé of Blesle had escaped, but little news reached her, and even if she had heard of the release of the priests in the roads of Aix, she could not have guessed him concerned in it. Several weeks later she heard Jean Crocq calling her, and before she could answer, he exclaimed, "There, monsieur, there she is, and there is that little angel—Marie, my pretty one; she loves her friend Jean, monsieur," and Suzanne saw the child standing with wondering, awe-struck looks before an old, bent man, whose hands were laid in blessing on her head, though his tremulous voice failed him. Suzanne looked—she could hardly recognise this broken man, so changed, so worn—yet it could be none else, and with a cry she dropped on her knees before him.

"My dear daughter—my poor Suzanne. 'Well done, good and faithful servant,'" he faltered, and his tears fell on Marie's young head.

"Now, monsieur, if you please, I will take charge of this little demoiselle—thou art a demoiselle now, my angel—and monsieur can tell Suzanne everything," said Jean, taking possession of Marie, who was quite ready to go with "her Jean," as she always called him. But there was so much to tell and to hear that Suzanne and the curé could hardly find words. Of his nephew's death he knew, and he had sought Château Clouzat, hoping to find Marie there. He refrained from blame of Mademoiselle de Courcelles, and simply said that he intended to remain with her, as she had suggested it, and that she was now prepared to receive Marie as her heiress. The intendant had

behaved well, when told how matters stood. He listened with his hand over his eyes to Suzanne's account of her interview with her foster-brother, and uttered a fervent blessing on the kind family who had sheltered the fugitives. Of his own sufferings, written on every line of his face and form, he said very little, dwelling chiefly, with touching pleasure, on the enthusiastic welcome shown to the liberated priests by the townspeople of Saintes, and then added, rather abruptly, while his eyes dwelt on the face which to him told a piteous story, "I have been to Blesle."

Suzanne could not answer. Even to the old priest who had seen her grow up she could not show the ever-bleeding wound. He continued—

"I had a sacred duty there. Before I fled, I concealed the holy vessels of the church. I found them where I had buried them; no profane hands had touched them. My daughter, I could not hide them without help—from whom did I ask it? From Romain."

She shrank as if a dart had pierced her.

"He was misled, he wandered into evil ways," said the priest, sadly; "but there was truth in what he said——"

"Truth, oh, mon père, can you say so? Yes, it sounded so well—all men as brothers, no more ill-will between high and low, safety for the helpless child and the white locks of old age, work for every one, no more bloodshed;—yes, he said that, and how did he set about it?"

"He was grievously wrong," repeated the priest, "but I knew that a confidence placed in him was safe. Only for a moment did I mistrust him, when he appeared among the gendarmes——"

"Ah!"

"You should have known him better, my poor child. Whatever his errors, he would have betrayed neither of us. He was watching to see you when the party appeared, led by a man whom he knew, whose courage consisted in sending others to death. Romain knew his fear of infection."

"Ah, I see it now. My Romain!" cried Suzanne, with joy that swept even self-reproach away for the moment. "But when—how——?"

"I learned it in the prison which we shared together."

"Romain in prison! Ah, yes, who has been safe? But on what charge?"

"Conspiracy against the nation, like myself," answered the priest, with a faint smile.

"And—and—oh, I know he did not escape! My Romain!" and then, after a pause, "Ah, mon père, did he—did he—repent?"

"Poor fellow! Poor good fellow!" answered the old man, much moved. "He had meant so well, he had seen so plainly the sufferings of his class, that he perceived no need of such repentance as you think of. He has all eternity to learn the truth in, whatever it is. Take comfort; would that all errors were no worse than his!"

Suzanne had hidden her face. "We parted in anger," she said, through her sobs.

"You were in all his thoughts, my poor child. It was his settled belief that I should be spared to tell you all this, and he bade me give you that,"—holding out a little worn copy of a *Semaine Sainte*, which Suzanne recollected having left behind at Blesle. "He kept it while we were in prison, and only gave it up as he went to the guillotine. It seemed preserved as by miracle, for none of us succeeded in hiding any other religious book. See, he kissed your name where I wrote it when I gave you the book, and bade me tell you he had meant well."

The curé knew how tenacious a nature was that of the peasant girl, whose life had run in but one deep and narrow groove. In a short time he had reason to think that if she would she might have a home and a husband, but to Suzanne all possibility of married life seemed as remote as if she had been a cloistered nun. Serene cheerfulness had returned to her, but youth and its hopes never could. She had her plans for the future, however. "When Mademoiselle Marie grows up," she once said to the old priest, "she will marry and need me no more. I shall be too old for a *Sœur*, mon père, but still I can set myself to help the poor and the sad, and make the world a little happier for others. After all, that was what my Romain wished."

"And you are not unhappy now, my poor child?"

"No, mon père, I can wait; and when we meet again we shall not misunderstand each other any more."



HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.

Y DEAR TOBY,

April is here; the streams are full and fresh, and the fish are hungry. The warm sun has tempted the flies to come out, and somehow the very smell in the spring air makes one think of fish, and streams, and rods, and lines; in fact, Toby, fish and fishing seem to be the subjects which most attract our attention just now, and so we will talk about them. I look back to my old diary, and the first entry in the month of April is, I see, "*Tickled three trouts in the Mermaid's Ford.*"

Now, supposing that you don't know much about trout and their habits, on seeing this statement you might naturally enough think that it was a hoax, for the date is the first of April, and you might exclaim, "Tickled a trout, indeed, a good idea! Trout ticklish? who ever heard of such a thing?" Or, supposing for a moment that you knew rather more about the ways of this fish, I hear you descanting on the unsportsmanlike mode of capturing trout, and condemning the proceeding as iniquitous, and nothing more or less than poaching. Well, in either case I venture to think your judgment would not be quite correct, for, Toby, I hope to persuade you not only that trout are ticklish, but also that, under certain circumstances, tickling them is not so flagrant a piece of poaching as you might at first suppose it to be. If you remember, I told you that the Mermaid's Ford is the name of the stream that fed the dam. I recall this because it was in consequence of its connection with the dam that I felt justified in tickling the fish at all. Once upon a time the dam was a stone quarry, and then it was filled with water and became a beautiful trout pond fed by the clear waters of the Mermaid's Ford. Traditions still lingered among the old village sportsmen of the gigantic trout which had lived and been caught in these waters, but at the time I speak of, alas! the trout were no more, so far as the dam was concerned. Some foolish anglers had been to a neighbouring pond after pike, and brought back

in their bait-kettles four or five little jack they had caught in a net when catching their baits. These they turned out in the dam on their return, and in a few years' time the trout had given way to a hungry colony of pike, which carried everything before it. So ends the history of the trout in the dam; but the Mermaid's Ford was still a trout stream; higher up, it communicated with a good trout pond, and there were always trout lying under its banks. Not that it was a big stream; I do not remember that the water was in any spot more than six feet in breadth; but it had a nice gravelly sandy bed, with stones here and there breaking the course of the stream into miniature rapids, and there were trees overhanging the greater length of it, from which tempting caterpillars and such food dropped into the stream, and, as it were, into the fishes' mouths. Here the trout which came down from the pond above with the "freshes" of water after rain awaited their fate. It was a choice of evils for them, poor fish. They must either go down to the dam, and be swallowed up by the pike, or run the risk of being dragged from their temporary hiding-places by the various processes of "tickling," "lading," and "spearing." Toby, if the fish were in a dilemma, surely I was too. The stream was too small, and overhung with bushes, to fish with a rod and line; there were no deep pools, but only holes under the banks, where the fish sulked, waiting for the next fresh. Here were trout close at hand, and the question was only whether they were to fall victims to the fingers of the villagers, to my fingers, or to the jaws of the pike in the dam. Yet, said conscience, tickling trout is not sportsmanlike. In such a combination of circumstances it was not unnatural that I urged that, as the trout must go by foul means somewhere, they might as well come to me, and therefore with a free conscience I sallied out after every "fresh" to pick up with my fingers the stray trout which were lurking in the holes in the banks.

Lucky for me and others who pursue trout in this way that the fish like being tickled. Our fingers were of but little avail did not the fish positively like being taken hold of, and after all it is only appealing to another sense in the fishes: we throw a fly on the water for them to see, and appeal to their sight; we give them the choicest brandling worm or bread-paste, appealing to their sense of taste; and some of us put oil of ivy and cloves to our pastes, on the supposition that the fish will be attracted by the smell of it; and now in tickling

them we appeal to their sense of touch. There only remains to attract them from their lairs, Orpheus-like, with music, and the round of the senses will be completed. But the naturalists are loth to allow that we have much chance of appealing to the sense of hearing, which some deny to the poor fishes altogether. When I have discovered some musical bait, Toby, I will let you know; for the present I will content myself with just telling you how to tickle a trout. Say you have such a stream to deal with as the Mermaid's Ford. Take off your coat, and roll up your shirt sleeves. You must be prepared to wade, and very likely to make yourself in a great mess. Never mind, as old Izaak Walton says, no one who means to be a fisherman must be afraid of dirtying his fingers. Get into the stream and walk *up* it, for the obvious reason that if you walk *down* stream you make the water you are going to very muddy, and cannot see what you are about. See, here is an old willow-tree growing well into the water, and apparently numberless caverns running under the bank in among the roots. The roots and fibres seem bright red, and feel like wire as you cautiously put your hands in among them. Begin at the lower side of the old root. Can you get both hands underneath it? Probably not; that is, not so far as you want to reach. Never mind, then; one hand will do. You bend down; your shoulder touches the water; your arm is well under the root;—what do you feel that makes you, regardless of comfort and the condition of your shirt sleeves, bend farther into the water, and stretch your arm eagerly still farther under the bank? Probably you have just touched a slimy surface, soft as velvet. It is a trout's side. He sidles away an inch at the first touch. You must follow him up—the sleeves are sacrificed, and once more you feel his side. Now scratch his side very gently, creeping up towards his head. His head will be *up* stream, so you need make no bungle. You find he sidles now towards your hand, and leisurely flaps his tail as if in approbation. You are close to his gills: put your fingers underneath his chest very gently, and then with a sudden and decisive movement grasp him with your thumb in one gill and a finger in the other, and pull him out and throw him on the bank. If your fish is large, and you can get two hands to him, all the better. For instance, here is a bit of bank where the meadow joins the stream. The water-rats have hollowed it, and the stream has hollowed it more: you put your hand under as before; you feel a three-quarter pounder. The

bigger the fish the more he will like to be scratched. This time keep one hand near his tail, and get the other gradually up to his gills as before. Then, when you are ready and he is quiet, grasp him just where his body tapers to where the tail begins to spread out, and simultaneously clutch him by the gills. Then you will find he has comparatively no power of wriggling, and you will have him safe. Sometimes you will get one under a stone; perhaps you have been too rough, and he is frightened and wants to bolt, but cannot, as your hand is stopping the only approach to his den at the back of the stone. Then you will have a struggle. Get him up against the stone; above if you can, and press him there. If you give his tail playing room, all is up with your chance of holding him. If you cannot reach the end of a hole, and feel sure there must be a fish at the end of it, get a willow wand, and peel the end of the bark so that it may show white, and then stir your prey up. He will come out quicker for seeing something *white*. Trout do not like white things, apparently. He will bolt, and then you must watch what new station he takes up. He is sure to go to some other hole to hide, and there will be as ready as ever to be tickled.

Such, Toby, was my method for pulling the stray trout out of the Mermaid's Ford with my hands. But I am afraid I went one step further in the poaching line—I used to *spear* them. The fish had enemies by night as well as by day. A file-cutter in the village made me a rude spear, constructed on the principle of an eel spear. This attached to a walking stick, and a bull's-eye lantern, were all the apparatus necessary. Arrived at the stream, every pool and shallow of which I knew by heart, I sought the rapids and shallow rippling spots, and turning the lantern upon the water, spear in hand, I watched intently the space so lit up. The water would ripple, and presently something would shoot by across the reflection thrown by the lantern. Down came my spear, often in vain, sometimes with effect. The trout came to the light; they liked it, and fell victims to their infatuation.

Here, I think, Toby, I will stop describing to you poaching practices and tell you how to catch a trout in a fair and legitimate way according to the books. It is as well to know everything, and all the ways in which it is possible to get trout out of a stream, and so I have just described to you the only two illegitimate methods of capture I ever adopted. Whatever theoretical reasoning may say against the practices,

I must say they gave me as a youngster great fun, and I had the satisfaction of knowing that I was not doing any real harm either to the race of trout or the race of anglers. But, Toby, you must learn to fish for trout properly with rod and line, and here is your first lesson. You must learn first to throw a line, and if you want to throw a line without whipping your flies off with a smack, follow these simple directions.

Get a stick about eight or ten feet long (the gardener will be getting some to stick the French beans and peas with), any kind will do, no matter how stiff, and tie to one end of it a string five yards long, with a button at the end of it. Put the button on the ground, and go back five steps, holding the rod; then with one or both hands jerk the stick or rod up, and send the button flying over your head to the grass at your back. Let it rest there a moment, and then send it forward again with a steady, swift movement of the stick, so as to send the button to the earth in front of you at the full distance of the string. You are then in a position to repeat the operation.

Now the use of the button in this is most important. The first maxim as to the management of a rod and line is *always to know where your line is*. Now if you send the button over your head with too great and sudden a jerk, so that the influence of your hand over the line is lost, by the impulse the button has acquired in the jerk, the button will fly out to the length of the line, and, being checked, will bound back, and may be two instead of five yards behind you. You make the return sweep to bring it over your head to the front: you calculate on its being five yards behind. It is only two, and your sweep only succeeds in bringing the button smartly against the back of your own head. If you wish to avoid this you will find that it is necessary to regulate the pace at which the button is going through the air; and if it is going fast you will find you must make your arm and stick go back fast too, so as to avoid the jerk at the end. Well, this regulating the pace of the button means that you know about where your line is, and if you can once do that skilfully you will find no difficulty at all in throwing a trout line finely and correctly.

When you have managed to regulate the flight of the button with a stiff, unbending stick, take your fly-rod and go through the same process. You will then find that you have to calculate for the amount of impetus given to the button by the spring of the top joint. You

check the spring of your rod with your wrist when it is necessary, and so you get to know your rod, and get command over your line simultaneously. This is the real secret of throwing a fly—to know whereabouts in the air your fly and line are. There are some people who fancy they have learnt to throw a line well when they can get out a long line upon a flat sheet of clear water such as a reservoir. Don't be content with that, Toby; it is really very useless, compared to being able to throw your point fly upon a given dandelion on the lawn ten yards in front of you. When you can manage the button, and *humour* its flight through the air by regulating the movement of your wrist and arm and your rod, take the button off and substitute a fly. You will find the fly very much easier to manage. It is most important, Toby, to practise throwing your line back over your head, and letting it fall on the grass behind. Guess in your mind whereabouts your fly has fallen, and then turn round and look to see how far you were wrong in your guess.

All through fly-fishing, it is quite as important to know where your line is, without turning round to look at it when it is behind you, as it is to make it fall lightly on the water in front of you. Think more of this than of acquiring the art of making your line alight softly on the water. That is another matter, or rather another step in the same path. If you have succeeded in landing your button gently on the grass in front at the full stretch of your line without any jerk at the end, you have probably acquired the art of throwing a light line, but circumstances arise which modify this; you do not want to throw the whole distance, yet you have more line out than is absolutely necessary. In such cases, you must learn to regulate the pace of the falling fly by the elevation and depression of the point of your rod. You will soon get the knack, Toby, if you go to work knowing definitely what you want to attain. Any vague floundering and whisking your line about in the hopes only of its coming down lightly is fatal to really acquiring the art.

So much for throwing your line, Toby.

The next thing to knowing how to throw your line is to know *where* to throw it, and that, Toby, I propose to suggest to you. I imagine I am going up any ordinary Scotch, Irish, English, or Welsh trout brook with you, rod in hand, at my side. Now, Toby, you will observe that nearly every river and brook is constructed on the same

principle. I mean, you will see alternate pools and shallows in every stream, and there are other broad features easily perceived with which every angler must be quite familiar.

You and I, Toby, have got over a gate into a field, and we walk straight down to the water. We happen to have come upon a pool. Now look at it, Toby. Do you see that the stream runs much more on one side of the bed of the river than on the other?—that one part of the pool is comparatively stagnant while the really moving water seems to be pushing along only under the opposite bank? Please to notice that the water is deeper where the current is, and also that whatever bubbles or froth are coming down on the top of the water move in the current which is curling under the opposite bank. Notice also, Toby, that the water is deeper at the head of the pool than at the low end. The bed of the pool slopes up from the deep water at its head to the shallow at the lower end, and the bed slopes equally up from the deep current to the opposite side. This, Toby, is the construction of *every* pool, be the river big or little. The course of the main current will sometimes vary—sometimes going right through the middle of the pool, and sometimes, owing to rocks, the sides of the pool may both be steep, and the water therefore deep; but, as a general rule, where a river works its own way, the pools are built on the principle of the one before us. This may seem very far from the subject of fishing, but it is in reality one of the most important notes to be remembered. I have pointed out to you, Toby, the formation of the pool, now listen to the application of the lesson to fishing. When you throw your fly on a stream, you should do it with some definite purpose. Do not merely throw a fly or two on the water, and hope a fish may happen to see them. Think where the fish is, and throw your fly into his mouth. Now in this pool, I will venture to say that, as it is the middle of the day, there will be no fish on the shallow side of the pool. Try at the foot of the pool, just where the current is running out. Yes, there is a fish there safe enough. All the current is worth trying, but more especially the *edges* of it, just where the stream is not quite so strong. The trout do not wish to have any unnecessary exertion while eating their dinner. To stand up against the full current is hard work; they just wait outside the current, but so close as to be able to dash in and get the food which comes floating down on the stream.

At the top of the pool you may find a little one struggling to get up to the next shallow; or perhaps you may get the king of the pool there, who lies waiting to get the first pick of the food which comes into the pool. But at this time of year, Toby, you must look for them on the shallows. They are scouring themselves there after their trip up the small brooks to breed. If the fish are feeding on the shallows, fish every inch of a shallow. They may be anywhere on a shallow. Throw up and across rather, and use a short line, for very likely if you are wading in a rippling shallow a fish may take your flies close to your very boots. So far, Toby, I have hurriedly tried to tell you how to throw your line, and where to throw it, though I do not pretend to have exhausted my instructions even on these points.

Your affectionate Uncle, &c.

THE TEAPOT.

By Hans C. Andersen.



HERE was once a proud Teapot: it was proud of its real china, proud of its long spout, and proud of its broad handle. It had something at both the front and the back—the spout in front, and the handle at the back; and about this it used to talk; but it did not talk about its lid, for that was cracked and riveted; it had a defect, and one does not care to talk about one's defects, other people do that quite enough. Cups, Cream-jug, and Sugar-basin—the whole tea-service—would think about and talk over the lid's deficiency much more than about the fine handle and the distinguished-looking spout: the Teapot was aware of that.

"I know them!" it said to itself: "I know my own weakness too, and I acknowledge it; that is my humility, my modesty. Failings we all have, but one has gifts too. The Cups receive a handle, the Sugar-basin a lid; I receive both gifts, and one thing in front which they never get. I get a spout, which makes me Queen of the tea-table. To the Sugar-basin and Cream-jug it is granted to be the ministers of sweet flavour; but I am the dispenser, the manager; I distribute the blessing amongst the thirsty sons of men. Within me is the Chinese leaf brewed up in the boiling tasteless water."

All this the Teapot used to say in the merry time of its youth. It stood upon the well-spread table; it was lifted by the daintiest of hands. But the dainty hand was awkward; the Teapot fell: off snapped the spout, off snapped the handle; the lid is not worth mentioning, enough has been said about that already. The Teapot lay in a fainting fit on the floor, whilst the boiling water ran out of it. It was a heavy blow, and the hardest part of it was that they laughed: they laughed at it, and not at the awkward hand.

"I never get the remembrance of it out of my head," said the Teapot, the last time that it was recounting its career to itself. "I was called 'invalid,' put by in a corner, and on the next day was given away to a woman who used to beg for dripping. I sank into poverty; stood without a word, either without or within; but there as I stood began my better life.

"We are born one thing and become altogether another. They put mould inside me, which for a teapot is to be buried; but in the mould was laid a flower-bulb. Who laid it there, who gave it me, I do not know; given it was, in exchange for the Chinese leaf and the boiling water—in exchange for the broken-off handle and spout. And the bulb lay in the earth, the bulb lay within me; it was my heart—my living heart, and such an one as I had never had before.

"There was life within me, there was strength, and vital force. The pulse beat, the bulb shot out sprouts; it was near bursting with thoughts and emotions. They broke out in flower; I saw it, I held it; I forgot myself in its beauty: a blessed thing it is to forget oneself in others!


"It did not say 'thank you' to me; it did not think about me; it was admired and praised. I was so glad about it; what must it not have been!

"One day I heard some one say that it deserved a better pot. They hit me right across the side; it was fearfully painful, but the flower got into a better pot—and I was thrown out into the court-yard, to lie there like an old potsherd; but I have the memory—of that I cannot be deprived."



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER V.

HE frost had set in at last in good earnest, and Christmas Day came, looking just like Christmas Day in a picture.

A world clothed in white, and sparkling with diamonds, met Maud's eyes as she looked out of her bedroom-window—itself a marvel of beauty in its silver tracery of frostwork; and there was actually a robin, with a very red breast, hopping from twig to twig of the ivy that formed a framework to the window; a robin just like the robins that come with good wishes on pretty Christmas cards. "A merry Christmas," thought Maud; "there is not much fear of the wish being in vain to-day, for with Aunt Fanny in the house it is difficult to be otherwise than merry." And then she began to wonder how they would spend the day. She felt that any loud boisterous merriment would be out of place, and distressing to her mother, for though she was not very old, she was old enough to know that of all days in the year Christmas Day is the one on which memory is most active, and that, to her mother, the day must come laden with a store of painful associations. It would be the third Christmas Day the Vernons had passed at Everton. The first had been a very happy one, a regular English Christmas, such as the children had heard and read of in their Indian home, where ice and snow, and the comfort and pleasantness of roaring fires were things hard to understand, but had never before enjoyed; and the second had been as miserable as the first had been joyous. How well Maud remembered it all!—her mother's pale, sad face when she came down in the morning; the choking sobs, that had obliged her to break off in the middle of reading prayers; the silent, tearful breakfast; the aching heart with which she herself had sat in the holly-decked church, and listened to the joyful anthem, and watched the bright faces of the congregation with a feeling of envy that was almost bitter—for to poor Maud it had seemed that all the world was happy but herself and her mother and brothers and sister, out of whose lives all brightness and colour were gone she felt for ever, leaving them sad and dull as the black frock she wore;—the

hurried stealing out of church before the rest of the congregation had risen from their knees, to avoid the greetings and kind words of friends and acquaintances that would have probably broken down the self-restraint it cost so great a struggle to maintain; the walk home hand-in-hand with her brothers—for the poor children in their sorrow clung to one another with a dim feeling that strength to bear, as well as to do, is found in union; and the discovery, when they reached home, of poor little Mabel, whom they had all thought too young to feel their common sorrow much, crouching on the floor in her dolls' corner, and sobbing as if her heart would break, because "she had gone to mamma's room to see how she was, and had found her lying on the sofa moaning, and when she had spoken to her she hadn't answered, and she was sure mamma was crying, and was very unhappy; and oh! were they never to be happy any more as they had been last Christmas Day?" Poor little Mabel! they had first tried to comfort her, and then they had cried with her, and that, perhaps, did more to comfort them all than anything else would have done at that moment. Oh! it had been a dreary day, and very glad they had all been to cut it short by going to bed early. And there had been many other dreary days before and since, for the children had all felt their father's loss very deeply, and did still feel it, though, as it was not in nature that their grief should be as lasting as that of their mother, they had, as time went on, become very fairly happy again. Indeed, as Maud looked out of window on this Christmas morning, and recalled all the hopeless sadness she had felt, both at the time of her father's death and for many a long month after it, and contrasted it with the real enjoyment of life to which it had at last insensibly given place, and above all with the perfect happiness of the last few days, she accused herself of most unnatural heartlessness and indifference; and if the tears that filled her eyes were in part tears of natural grief for the death of her father, now so freshly remembered, they were also in part tears of remorse for having allowed herself for a time to forget that grief. A year ago she had wept because she should never be happy again. To-day the tears came because she feared she had grown only too happy. Could it be wrong to be happy? Could it be right to try to be unhappy? Maud, as she asked herself these questions, began to feel what a very difficult business life is.

Her sad and perplexing thoughts were interrupted by a knock at the door. It was Aunt Fanny, in her dressing-gown, come to wish her a merry Christmas, and to learn where she could find a supply of string and paper for some mysterious packing that must be done before breakfast.

There was a something unusual in Maud's voice as she answered, that did not escape her aunt's notice; she looked into her face, and saw the traces of tears. "My dear child," said she, "you have been crying. What is the matter? Tell me all about it, and perhaps I can help you." And as she spoke she put her arm round Maud's waist, and drew her close to herself so lovingly, that Maud felt that to tell Aunt Fanny all her perplexity was the surest way of getting it rightly solved. So they sat down together on the bed, and Maud, with some confusion and many tears, told her troubles to her aunt. Fanny Arnott was not slow to understand her.

"I know how you feel about it all," she said, "and I think it is quite natural, and does not show either that you are thoughtless or that you were wanting in affection for your father." Maud looked up gratefully; it was a great relief that her aunt did not think her heartless. "You see," Fanny continued, "you are very young, and your life lies before you, not behind you. It would be very terrible—so terrible that if things were so ordered, few of us could bear to live at all—if a loss, such as you suffered two years ago, were to make you feel permanently, as it made you feel at the time, that the brightness had gone out of your life for ever. If you did feel this——"

"I did feel it at first," said Maud.

"I have no doubt you did. It was as natural that you should feel it then as it would be unnatural that you should feel it now. But when you had this feeling did you not feel that you ought to try to get over it?"

"I don't think so. I don't think I thought about it at all in that kind of way—I mean as to what I ought or ought not to do. I only knew that I was very unhappy, and that we were all very unhappy, and I thought it would be always like that; and I hoped somehow that it would not last long—I mean that I should not live long."

"Well, and do you think that it would be a good thing to get back into such a state of mind as that? Do you think that a person who only wishes life to be over and done with, and who cares for nothing

that is going on—neither pleasure nor duty—can be useful in the world?”

“No, I don’t suppose one would be very useful if one were always crying and wishing oneself dead.”

“Nor I either,” said Aunt Fanny; and then she paused for a few minutes, after which she went on. “I had a great loss myself, as perhaps you know, about six years ago, and I had much the same feelings about it that you have had about your father’s death.” Maud knew to what she referred. She had often heard her mother speak of another sister, only a few years older than Fanny, who had died while the Vernons were still in India; and Maud had sometimes amused herself with tracing a likeness to herself in a picture of this aunt that hung in her mother’s room. She wondered now whether Fanny saw the likeness.

“When first my sister died,” Fanny continued—for a look in Maud’s eyes told her that she would like to hear the story of the grief that had been like her own—“when first my sister died the world seemed suddenly to have grown quite empty for me, and the thought that I might live on in this blank world for years and years, till I should be quite an old woman, almost crushed me. You see, we had been everything to one another, my sister Marion and I. We had slept in the same room ever since I could remember, we had done the same lessons, we had read the same books. I don’t think either of us had a single interest that the other did not share, and Marion, being the elder, had always taken the lead; so that when she died I felt quite lost. For weeks I could do nothing, for every occupation I attempted to interest myself in only reminded me of her, and was intolerable without her. At one moment I wished to go right away to some new place, where there would be at least none of these painful associations; but the next moment I felt that I could not leave the room where we had been so much together. This went on until I was getting quite ill both in body and mind, and at last one day my mother spoke to me very seriously, almost hardly I thought at the time—most wisely and kindly I have learnt since to feel.”

“What did she say?” asked Maud, as her aunt paused for a moment.

“She pointed out to me that though all possibility of pleasure *might* have gone out of my life, there was one thing that could never go while life lasted, and that was duty; and that while I continued in the

state of apathy I was then encouraging I was certainly not doing my duty. She put this so clearly before me that I resolved to take her advice, and go away from home for a little while, and then come back and make a fresh start. Well, I went away, and when I came home again I set to work in real earnest to *live*. I took up all my old occupations again determinedly, and found as many new ones for myself as the day would hold, so that I had no time left for brooding. Of course it was not quite easy at first, but it became easier as time went on, till at last I found that the things I had done in the beginning as duties were becoming real pleasures, and that new interests were growing up in my life." Fanny Arnott paused.

"And then?" said Maud, interrogatively.

"And then I began to feel as you have been feeling this morning. I thought I was forgetting my sister, and I hated myself for being happy. To laugh and talk without her, to read with pleasure new books that she could never read, to like new friends that she had never known, seemed heartless, and I was half inclined to throw up everything once more, and to give up my life to mourning for my sister. But wiser thoughts came, and, besides, I believe I could not have done it if I would, for I was young and well, and such a course would have been most unnatural, so I went on living and really enjoying life on the whole, in spite of times of great sadness and self-reproach."

"And now you are happy?"

"Yes, I can honestly say that I am happy—even very happy."

"But, then, do you never miss Aunt Marion at all? You cannot have forgotten her; I mean you——" But Maud hardly knew what she did mean, still less how to express her meaning.

Fanny helped her. "I certainly have not forgotten my sister; but I think what you meant was, do I not still miss her?"

"Yes, that is what I meant. You must always miss her, and we shall always miss papa, and it seems dreadful to have that feeling all one's life, though it seems still more dreadful to get over it."

"I don't think I quite agree with you now," said Fanny, "though I should have agreed with you at the time I am speaking of. As I say, I have certainly not forgotten my sister, but then I do not think I can say with truth that I exactly miss her. If I missed her, I should feel that there was a blank in my life, and that I do not

think is the case ; though I think constantly of Marion, it is with real pleasure. The remembrance of the years we were together is very precious to me. When I look back upon that time of distress that I have been telling you of, it seems to me very wonderful that I should be able to think and talk quietly of what then seemed a sorrow too great for me to bear."

They were both silent for a few minutes ; then Fanny said, "I have told you all this, dear Maud, because I know that in difficulties of this kind it is often a great comfort, and even a help, to know that others have felt as we do and have found a way out of their perplexities, so that we need not despair."

"Yes, thank you, I think it is a help, and I am sure it is a great comfort to me to know that I need not think myself hard-hearted because I have got over papa's death more quickly than mamma has. You are *sure* it is not heartlessness?"

"Quite sure, dear. I think people often make themselves very needlessly unhappy by encouraging feelings which, if they were to succeed in acquiring them, they would have to try their utmost to get over, or else be very useless members of society, and I have come to the conclusion that it is a very good rule, before setting to work to cultivate any particular feeling, just to ask oneself, 'Will this feeling, when I have got it, help me to do my duty—to be more useful to those around me?' and then, according as the answer is 'Yes,' or 'No,' to encourage the feeling or not."

"But then," said Maud, "it might sometimes be very difficult to get the feeling after one had decided that it was a good one to have. Supposing, now, you had told me I ought to be more unhappy than I am, I don't know how I should have set about making myself so."

Fanny Arnott smiled kindly. "I do not think you would have found it very difficult, for it seems to me that you were in a fair way to make yourself very miserable indeed over your hard-heartedness. But I believe that when we have decided what feelings will best fit us to be useful to our fellow-creatures, the best way to get those feelings is to set to work at once to do the duty that lies nearest to us. You see I am a great believer in *duty* as the one road out of all difficulties."

"Yes," sighed Maud ; "but the difficulty is to know what is one's duty."

"Sometimes; but not quite so often as we are inclined to think," said Fanny. "But it certainly is a large question, that about what is one's duty; and as the clock is just striking nine, and we are neither of us more than half dressed, I think we must not stop to discuss it now. But one thing I will say, that it is not the least of our duties to be as bright and cheerful as we can, so that we may make a little more sunshine in a world that has already more than enough of fog and rain and cold in it. Now I must really go, or I shall never get down to breakfast."

Maud kissed her aunt, and thanked her for the long talk.

"I shall be very glad, dear, if what I have said is of any use to you;" and then Fanny Arnott made Maud very happy by adding, "It is always a great happiness to feel that one's own experience may be useful to others, and it will make me especially happy if mine in this case should prove a help to you, for, do you know, dear, from the first moment I saw you I have felt a very great interest in you and love for you, not only for your own sake, but because you have reminded me very much of the sister I have been telling you of."

Maud was very glad, but she did not know how to express her gladness better than by another kiss, and then Aunt Fanny went away, but only to return in a very few minutes. "You never gave me any paper or string after all."

"Oh, no! I will get it at once. Let me come and help you with your packing."

"No, my packing must be done in strictest privacy. Thanks, that will do. Now pack yourself into your clothes as fast as you can, or you will be disgracefully late."

As Maud came down to breakfast she met Harry on the stairs with an open parcel in his hands, the contents of which he hastily concealed on perceiving his sister; and when she, naturally connecting the parcel with her aunt's request for paper and string, asked if he had had a present from Aunt Fanny, he shook his head mysteriously, and would not commit himself to any more satisfactory reply than a general condemnation of feminine curiosity. The rest of the party, who were already assembled in the dining-room, were also occupied with parcels, and Maud was glad to find them in more communicative mood than Harry, whose reserve was the subject of general wonderment and reprobation.

"And the worst of it is," said Mabel, "that Aunt Fanny knows about it, and won't make him tell us."

"Yes, I am at the bottom of the plot," answered Fanny, "and I shall be very angry with Harry if he betrays our secret."

Mabel was very busy extricating a lovely wax doll from folds upon folds of silver paper, and Jack was gloating over a well-furnished tool chest, both presents from Aunt Fanny; and, beside her own plate, Maud saw, lying on the table, not a paper parcel, but a book which, on taking it up, she found to be "*The Spanish Gypsy*," by George Eliot. She need have no doubt as to the giver, for on the fly leaf was written, "Maud Vernon, from Fanny Arnott."

"Oh, Aunt Fanny, how kind! Your dear '*Spanish Gypsy*,' that you are always quoting from. There is nothing I should like half as much to have!"

"I hope you may find the book as good a friend as I have. I know few things I could as ill spare out of my life as my acquaintance with the '*Spanish Gypsy*,'" replied her aunt. And then they proceeded to breakfast.

The day passed as happily as Maud had hoped it would. In the morning all the party walked to church, and I do not think that even Mrs. Vernon—though once or twice during the service she shed a few tears—felt that there was anything in its joyousness that jarred with her own feelings; and, as for Maud, she thanked her aunt as she came out for having "put her in tune."

To the great satisfaction of Harry and Jack, who had debated the question very earnestly all the way home from church, it was decided at luncheon that there was no harm in skating on Christmas Day. So the skates were hunted up, and Fanny Arnott and the three elder children went down to the pond, while Mrs. Vernon retired to her room to rest, and Mabel devoted herself to her family cares.

The ice was in excellent condition, very hard and very smooth. "Just like glass," Harry said, triumphantly; but Maud, who was to make her first attempt at skating this afternoon, wished it had been a little less glass-like, for to keep one's footing on that slippery surface, perched up on a pair of steel blades, seemed to her a sheer impossibility, and she was not sorry to find that her aunt, in spite of some small experience in skating gained during a winter

she had passed in the north three years ago, was not more courageously-minded than herself.

Putting on skates is always a tedious business. To begin with, there is generally no gimlet to be found, and when this difficulty is got over doubts are apt to arise, in the case of ladies at least, as to whether the boots are thick enough to be pierced without hurting the foot inside; then it is ten chances to one that the straps are too long and that more holes have to be bored, and pocket-knives, with ingenious appliances, are in demand; or, worse still, the straps are too short, and have to be lengthened with bits of string, which, though it gives an opportunity to the person putting on the skates of displaying much skill in the art of tying knots, is apt to be wearisome to the person on whom the skates are being put, who by this time is generally suffering from cramp in the leg. These, and a score of other petty bothers, are well-known to the skater; I mean, of course, not the fine lady or gentleman who walks into a shop in Regent Street and invests fabulous sums of money in skates, so perfect and so pretty that one is only sorry the skater is not more competent to use them, but humble boys and girls in the country, who, their pocket-money being limited, are fain to be content with old skates, adapted, as well as may be, to new feet. Such was the state of the case with Harry, Jack, and Maud. Fanny Arnott was in a position more nearly resembling that of the London skater; the pair of skates Harry had insisted on her buying in Dollington fitted perfectly, and were firmly fastened to her feet in a very few minutes—so firmly, indeed, that she declared Harry had crushed all her toes to jelly, and that, very far from feeling able to skate, she should never be able to walk or even stand again, but should hobble about for the rest of her days like a “Heathen Chinee.” Harry, however, assured her that she would be all right in a few minutes; so with exemplary patience she sat down on the rug to wait till Maud should be equipped. Maud’s skates presented all the difficulties that might be anticipated from a pair that Cousin Frank had given five shillings for in Everton four years ago, when a young sister of his had been staying with him, and the ice had borne for a single day; and which had since then been lying about in cupboards, getting rustier and rustier, losing a strap here and a screw there, till, about a fortnight ago, Maud had stumbled upon them, thought them likely to fit her, and begged them as a great favour of Cousin Frank,

who had ungrudgingly made them over to her, not without expressing a regret that they were so little worth having. However, Maud's patience and Harry's perseverance were more than equal to the difficulties, and at last Maud found herself quite ready—that is, but for a most uncomfortable feeling of perfect helplessness in both her legs, she would have been quite ready—to do the outside edge and cut figures of eight.

"I flatter myself I have made rather a good job of those rickety old skates," said her brother, as he complacently surveyed her feet.

"Yes, thank you, Harry, I think you have managed very cleverly."

"Well, get up now, and Jack and I will each give you a hand to start you."

"Don't you think I had better wait a little while to get used to my skates, like Aunt Fanny?"

"Better begin at once, I think."

And so Maud, who did not like to seem cowardly, allowed herself to be pulled up by her two brothers, and held between them in a perpendicular position—I cannot say she stood.

"Now, how do you feel?"

"Very much as if I were tipsy."

"Well, never mind that; hold on tight and strike out; you can't fall with us two to hold to."

The first part of this advice Maud was ready enough to follow; she held on with all her might, clinging convulsively, first to one brother and then to the other, till they were inclined to say "don't hold on;" but as for striking out, that was a very different thing. Strike out indeed! lift a foot from the ground and leave her body to be supported by only one steel blade! The thing was impossible, as Maud explained. Well, then, would she stand still, and not clutch at them quite so frantically, but just hold one hand of each and let them lead her gently along? She would try. She did try, and the result was that in another minute the whole trio found themselves laughing and struggling in a confused heap upon the ice. As soon as they had recovered themselves sufficiently to "take notice," their astonished eyes beheld Aunt Fanny actually standing upright on her skates. She had suddenly taken courage and achieved a first step all by herself, but that done she could get no further; so a chair was given to her, and with this she made some progress; while Maud crawled back to the rug and said she should

wait till the spirit moved her as it had moved Aunt Fanny, and Harry and Jack announced their intention of putting on their own skates and leaving the ladies to shift for themselves; a course that Harry justified by reminding his aunt that she had indignantly declined his offers of



assistance a few days ago, calling herself a strong-minded woman, and by enlarging upon the discouraging return made by Maud for the help they had given her. To which Maud replied that she was only too glad to be allowed to sit down in peace; and Fanny laughingly declared

that after the way she had just seen Harry roll over, she should certainly not care to trust herself to such a broken reed. And perhaps when she saw the very uncertain steps with which he first crossed the pond, after putting on his own skates, she did not repent of her decision.

The short winter afternoon was soon gone. By the time Fanny Arnott had reached the point of being able—not very fast certainly or with much grace—to go up and down the pond quite by herself without even the help of a stick, and Maud had begun to feel tolerably happy with a chair so long as there was nobody near enough to her to make her dread a collision, it was getting dark, and Mabel came running from the house with a message that mamma thought they must all be frozen, and that they had better come in and have a cup of tea. They were not by any means frozen, for, as all skaters, even those in the chair stage, know, there is no exercise in the world that warms one from top to toe like skating; but as they were not any the less for that very willing for a cup of tea, they lost no time in taking off their skates and following Mabel into the house.

(To be continued.)

THE MECCA PILGRIMS.



UNT EMMA, you promised, you know, when you were telling me about the fossil hunt, to give me, some other day, an account of the Mecca pilgrims."

"Well, Charlie, my promises must not be like piecrust, so I had better redeem this one without loss of time, and I will begin at once if you are ready."

"Not much fear as to that, aunty. I cannot run very far yet," said poor little Charlie, "and I think it would be hard to find a time when I should not be ready for a story."

"This, however, is not exactly a story," said his aunt, "and you may not care so much about what I have to tell, but as you wished to hear it I will do my best to make it interesting."

"I told you, I think, that every Mussulman is enjoined by the Korán, his holy book, either to make the pilgrimage to Mecca once in his life, or to pay some one else to do it for him."

"And will it be considered just as good in their religion, aunty, if they *pay* instead of doing the work themselves?"

"Yes, Charlie; it is a strange idea that of getting another to act or to suffer in one's stead, but we find that among heathen and Mahomedan people it seems quite natural: in China, a man condemned to death will pay another to have his head cut off in his place; and a rich Mussulman will send a poor one to perform a tedious journey for him. And, after all, I do not know that the notion is quite unheard of in England; there are twenty people who will spend money in charity for one who will give his own time and trouble to look into and relieve a case; but with regard to our pilgrimage, its object is to carry each year a new covering for the Kaaba, or holy house at Mecca, and to enable the pilgrims to kiss the black stone which, tradition says, was presented by the angel Gabriel to the patriarch Abraham, and also to recite certain appointed prayers upon Mount Arafát.

"The covering is a sort of coarse black brocade, adorned with inscriptions from the Korán, many of them worked in gold; it is called the Kisweh, and is manufactured at the expense of the Sultan. There is always a grand procession at the departure and return of the caravan: the Kisweh is carried in four pieces, each upon a separate donkey; then follow a great many dervishes, who, you know, are religious devotees—these generally perform various juggling tricks as they go along, such as pretending to run an iron spike into their eyes, or to swallow a sword, or to do something equally wonderful; then follows a camel, richly caparisoned, bearing the Mahh'mil, which is a sort of small tent made of brocade and silver, and containing nothing but two copies of the Korán in silver cases. Behind this Mahh'mil is usually to be seen a Turkish officer, carrying a richly-embroidered green bag which contains the key of the Kaaba. Then comes, borne by another camel, the veil which is hung before the door of the Kaaba, and following this, a number of dervishes of different sects; strangely dressed, some in sheep-skins, some in queer fantastic garments, made of one knows not what, and all bearing flags or banners with inscriptions upon them. Then more camels, some bearing men playing on kettle-drums, others with large green palm-branches fixed upright upon the saddles: some carry large bells, others water-skins; one bears the square treasure chest containing the money for defraying those expenses of the pilgrimage which are paid by government. The

baggage of the Emir-el-Hadj, or chief of the pilgrimage, is borne by several camels, and the Emir himself comes after it, surrounded by officers of state and a guard of honour from the Pasha, and followed by a most discordant band and a motley crew of attendants of all kinds.

"This procession usually halts in the plain of the Hasweh for two or three days, and then goes on to the lake of the pilgrims, about eleven miles from Cairo, where it halts again, and here it is joined by the great mass of the pilgrims, and the caravan finally sets forth. Formerly, a very singular character used to accompany the Mahh'mil; he was called 'the Sheikh of the Camel;' he wore no clothes save an old pair of trousers, and during the whole of the journey he was said to roll his head unceasingly from side to side; he went with the caravan for many years, and was supplied by the government with two camels and with his provisions. Lane, who tells us this story, mentions a yet more strange individual, who also accompanied the caravan; she was called 'the Mother of the Cats,' and always had five or six cats sitting beside her on her camel; she was an old woman, and wore no clothes but a shirt, and had her head uncovered.

"The journey to Mecca is through rocky and sandy deserts with scarcely a green spot, and the thirty-seven days of travelling are days, or rather nights, of hardship, for it is usual to ride by night and to rest by day.

"Each pilgrim is obliged to wear a peculiar dress, made of two pieces of cotton, linen, or woollen cloth, without any seam or ornament; and called the Hhera'm; the instep and heel as well as the head of the pilgrim must be bare: however, they use umbrellas to keep off the fierce heat of the sun.

"Some of the pilgrims instead of riding their camels use a litter to travel in; these are of two or three kinds, and all exceedingly uncomfortable: the rudest of them is a mere square platform supported upon the animal's back by being placed upon chests which are slung upon each side of him; there is a small arched covering overhead; this machine is called a shibreeyeh, and accommodates but one person. The second kind will convey two people, who, however, must be in perfect misery if they remain in it for any time: I tried it for a few moments and was very glad to get out again. Imagine two wooden settles with high backs, fastened together, the backs turned outwards,

and the poor people sitting sideways within, a covering being fastened overhead; the front is open: the long swinging pace of the camel jolts you severely, and you are knocked helplessly against the sides of your wooden box, and so bruised and shaken that walking would be to my mind far preferable. This kind of litter is called a *moosuttah*, and is in very common use.

"The last kind, the *takt-er-wan*, is much the best, but more expensive; as it is either carried between two camels or drawn by four mules; it resembles an Indian palanquin, and one or two persons can lie at full length in it: it is built of woodwork, or cane, covered with tarpaulin, and has sliding doors in the sides, and sometimes also a lattice for carrying water-bottles and keeping them cool in the current of air. The *takt-er-wan* is slung upon poles, and has feet to it, so that it can be set down on the ground when the camels are taken out to rest and feed. We had one of these *takt-er-wans* with us for an invalid of our party and it answered very well.

"When the pilgrims have completed their devotions at Mecca, have gone seven times round the Kaaba, seven times kissed the black stone, have ascended Mount Arafat and been present at the recitation there of a *Khootbeh*, as certain prayers are called, they then commence their return journey. In the valley of Mooná they halt for a day, and there they complete the ceremonies by sacrificing sheep, goats, cows, or she camels, eating part of the flesh themselves and giving the rest to the poor. They then shave their heads, pare their nails, and either resume their ordinary dress or put on a new one.

"This sacrifice is called *the ransom*, and is held in remembrance of that offered by Abraham instead of his son *Ishmael*, for the Mahometans believe that it was *Ishmael*, and not Isaac, who was to have been slain.

"When the returning caravan approaches Cairo, an officer, accompanied by a couple of Arabs, mounted on swift dromedaries, pushes on ahead and arrives at the citadel four or five days in advance of the rest, with news for the Pasha of the return of the pilgrims. This officer is called the *Shaweesh*, and usually brings letters from the pilgrims to their friends. Those of the great and rich he delivers himself, and receives handsome presents in return; but he is said to sell the despatches of the poorer sort to those who speculate upon them, buying the privilege of delivering them and obtaining rewards from anxious relatives at home.

"These latter often set out to meet the caravan and carry food and clothes to husbands, sons, or brothers; but often they hear the sad tidings that the loved ones have died from fatigue or privation; and they return to the city rending the air with their melancholy shrieks of wailing, while the more happy ones accompany their friends with music and rejoicing, reminding one much of the Scripture accounts of the women welcoming David and Saul on their return from the wars.

"Very shortly after the arrival of the pilgrims in Cairo, one of the greatest Mussulman festivals takes place; that of the celebration of the birth and death of the Prophet; for both events are said to have taken place on the same day. We were fortunately in Cairo at the time, so I can tell you about it. The festival, called the Moolid en Nebbee, lasts ten days, and during this time tents and booths are pitched in the Uzbekéah, the great square of Cairo, and the whole place is like a fair; sweetmeat-shops and coffee-shops are thronged both day and night, and various kinds of amusements are going on; the Sha'ers and Mohaddits, tellers of tales and singers of songs, are constantly singing or reciting for whoever will listen to them, and usually surrounded by interested crowds; but the principal attraction is at night, and then the whole place is brilliantly illuminated: the last night of the festival is the best, and that was the one we chose for visiting it.

"Each particular sheikh of dervishes has a tent lighted up according to the wealth of its owner, with more or less coloured lamps suspended in lines, and in the centre are several banners; the tents are larger or smaller according to the number of followers of its owner, who come there to perform their zikrs. It is very strange to see in each tent a circle of fanatics, mostly dervishes, but joined occasionally by other devout Mussulmans, sitting or standing, and with frantic gestures repeating, or rather shouting, 'Al'láh, Al'láh, Al'láh!'—'God, God, God!' They begin by sitting in a circle cross-legged, and repeating the Fa't'hah, or first chapter of the Korán. Then they chant a few words in praise of Mahommed, and after a silence of two or three minutes repeat Fa't'hah again, but silently. They next sing 'La' ila'ha, il'la-llah'—'there is no God but God,' to a sort of air in a slow measure, bowing the head and body the while. After a little time the chanting and bowing become quicker, and the Moon'shids (singers of poetry) occasionally sing an ode to the Prophet which, I am told, is very like the Song of Solomon in character.

"Sometimes they sing out the word *Med 'ed*, accentuating each syllable, and this is an invocation of spiritual aid.

"The '*La' ila'ha il'la-llah*' is then sung to another air, first slowly, then very quickly, but standing; and they next proceed to shout, or rather groan out, *Al'láh* in a very hoarse voice and with a great effort, and this they continue a long time, growing very much excited, bowing more quickly and lower, backwards and forwards, to the right and to the left, and really seeming almost like maniacs; the Sheikh (often an old and venerable man), standing in the centre of the circle, directs all the movements.

"These zikrs continue all night, with only short intermissions for pipes and coffee. When they played upon their *náys*, or flutes, they made something really like music, but as they got more excited and took down their *bazes* and *társ* (a kind of drum) and cymbals, and all began to beat together, the noise was fearful, and I was too glad to escape from it. There is no doubt, however, that these poor people are perfectly sincere, and perform these things, which we think so extraordinary, as acts of religion; and in each tent are crowds of admiring lookers on, some of whom occasionally rise and join the zikr.

"The tent of the Sheikh el Bekkree, or great Sheikh, who presides over all the orders of dervishes in Egypt, was lighted by large glass lustres as well as lamps; and that of his brother, another important Sheikh, by huge ornamental candles, and both most gaily decked with banners.

"Besides the zikrs in the tents, others take place round a '*Sáree*,' which is a mast secured by ropes from which hang lamps; or a '*Kha'ein*,' which consists of four masts in a line, from which are suspended many ropes bearing lamps formed in fanciful devices, such as birds, flowers, spear-heads, &c. The whole scene was most remarkable and most picturesque—the broad avenue of the Uzbekëeah with the long lines of light; the dense ever-shifting turbaned crowds; the tents of the devotees; the coffee-drinkers; the vendors of beans, cakes, bread, and sweetmeats; the procession of the *ishárah*, or banners of the different sects, preceded by lanterns, fifes, and flutes; and the brilliant moon looking down upon it all, made a wonderful picture.

"But the most surprising part of all was what followed next day—the ceremony of the *Doseh*, or treading.

"To have any chance of seeing this well we had to take a carriage

and be early afield ; so about twelve o'clock, two good hours before the performance was to begin, we were again in the Uzbekëeah. We had so much to amuse us that the time did not seem long.

"The Uzbekëeah was one living, moving mass ; more quiet, I must say, than an English crowd, but, of course, not particularly well-disposed towards people not of their faith : two stones were thrown into the carriage, but fortunately no one was hurt.

"We took up our stand near the house of the great Sheikh, and observed the motley groups surrounding us. There were Turks, Arabs, Albanians, Nubians, Syrians, all in holiday costume ; veiled ladies, beneath whose black mantles peeped forth robes of blue, yellow, or rose-colour ; women of the middle classes all covered in white, or else wearing hhab'arahs of plaid silk and cotton ; poor graceful fellahás (women of the lowest class) with nothing but their drapery of dark blue, these often bearing on their heads trays of bread or other eatables ; Sackhas with their water skins ; hhemálees offering water in very bright brass cups, and some of them having their ibreeck, or jar, ornamented with brass wrought in fanciful figures with rings and chains and other decorations hanging from it, and a sprig of the bitter orange stuck into the mouth of the jar. These hhemálees are dervishes, and give the 'cup of cold water' from religion.

"Now and then a bedouin of the desert, mounted on a fine horse, would dash into the crowd, and how he and his horse got through was a miracle ; and not less so the fact that people carried on their heads, without ever dropping them, trays of cakes and sweetmeats, leban, and little toys, though they were pushed and jostled on all hands. Some dervishes came to beg of us ; one was dressed in white, wore round his neck three long rows of large black beads, his long jet-black glossy hair was curled in ringlets, and on his head was a helmet-shaped cap of red embroidered cloth, having round it a thick short fringe of curled wool ; he held out for backshesh a sort of boat-shaped copper vessel in which some orders of dervishes carry their food, and which the people believe confers a blessing upon anything put into it and prayed over.

"Another dervish was delightful ; his cloak, petticoat, and conical cap were all made of pieces of gay-coloured shaggy cloth sewn together, and having upon them the large gilt letters used as shop marks. He had a staff in his hand.

"The girls, gayly dressed in scarlet trousers, blue robes, and brown

petticoats, with white veils over head and face; women carrying on their shoulders little children, who, though often fearfully dirty, sported velvet caps embroidered in gold; and jugglers turning platters on sticks and performing other feats surrounding the swings and merry-go-rounds; the gay tents of blue, red, and yellow, adorned with banners; the masts for the zikrs, with flags of all colours; the acacia trees in which sat old men and boys who had climbed up to see the show; and numbers of people upon walls or any elevated spot, formed charming subjects for sketches had we but had the materials with us.

"Presently all the consuls and all their wives, preceded by Kawasses, were seen marching towards the house of the Sheikh el Bekkree, and not long after this a general stir proclaimed the approach of the Sheikh of the Saadeeyeh dervishes. Upon this a number of men drove before them a number of others who appeared to be hardly conscious of anything, and to be scarcely able to stand upright: these poor fellows were made to lie down on the ground upon their faces, and closely packed together by those who came with them, and who, we were told, were their religious teachers, and of the sect of the Saadee dervishes: they ran up and down over the prostrate bodies, after having arranged them to their liking; and then the Sheikh, mounted upon a large horse which was led by two men, rode over the line; the horse at first starting showing some repugnance to stepping upon the men, but afterwards ambled quietly over them, and each was trodden upon once and sometimes twice. It is said that no one is ever hurt by this ceremony unless he has had the presumption to undergo it without previous prayer and fasting; but we saw several much injured, and one apparently nearly killed. They were carried off as quickly as possible. The Sheikh went into the house of the Sheikh el Bekkree, and, I believe, performed the same ceremony there. It was an extraordinary and not very pleasant sight, and shows what men may be driven to by mistaken zeal."

"Thank you, aunty," said Charlie; "I like to hear about it, though I should be sorry to be one of the devotees myself."



BURIED NAMES OF NOTE REVIVIFIED.

1. *Ho! merry girls and laughing boys,*
Let HOMER's lays inspire your joys ;
2. WELLINGTON's noble praises *swelling,*
To north and south his glories telling.
3. Above all colonels *on dry land that fight,*
NELSON, our great sea-captain's name, shines bright.
4. The poet's *pen serves many a noble aim,*
The noblest to record our SPENSER's name.
5. And BEDE is not forgotten, tho' he *be*
Dead to all else but glorious memory.
6. ANSON a man *so noble was,* that he
Has caused his name to sound o'er land and sea.
7. On BACON's tomb *a constant blaze*
Should celebrate his lasting praise.
8. DRYDEN, by *sundry dense* and laboured rhymes,
Disclosed the evil manners of his times.
9. In wars terrific *lives were lost and won,*
Ere CLIVE subdued the children of the sun.
10. NEWTON, a man who *knew to name* all powers
By which to count and rule the passing hours.
11. Our GATTY's praise inspires each loving song,
At tyros' homes it sounds from every tongue.
12. Aunt Judy's *cot to cheer,* a reader kind,
With Walter SCOTT, instructs the infant mind.
13. And ye who would a true affection claim,
O read of Thomas MORE the honoured name.

EADGYTH.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



ABBERWOCKY writes to inform "A Lancashire Witch" that the quotation she asks for is in a hymn by Thomas Park (1797), and will be found in Sir R. Palmer's "Book of Praise," p. 276.

"Ida." The lines you ask about are in the "Song of the Shirt," by Thomas Hood. Aunt Judy does not think that it is published by itself.

"A Russian Lady," "Edith," "A travelled Monkey," and "Ida," are sincerely thanked for their receipts for colouring Easter Eggs. Aunt Judy has forwarded them to "Dame Durden" by post.

Five Correspondents write to inform "Beatrice" that her quotation is from Ezekiel xxxiii. 32.

"May" will give designs for crest albums, in exchange for old postage stamps. Three dozen stamps for one design. Address, Miss Kettle, Merri-dale, Wolverhampton.

"F. M. H." asks for the name of the great man who defined greatness as "Truth, reverence, and good-will." Also, where the following sentence is to be found:

"Ignorance is the curse of God, knowledge the wings with which we fly to heaven."

She thinks it is from Shakespeare; but surely this is a mistake?

"E. Willis" and some friends have formed an Essay Club; but wanting six members more they think that perhaps some of our readers may like to join it. The members must be under twenty years of age. Address, E. Willis, Rectory, Trimley St. Mary, Ipswich.

"The Tailor." Aunt Judy was much pleased to receive your letter, and hear

how successful your performance of "The Hunchback" had been; and also that your friends in Devonshire had liked and acted the play. Copies of our number for December, 1867, containing "Abon-Hassan the Wag," may be obtained from Messrs. Bell and Daldy.

"Freda." You must apply to the publishers of "Sunshine" for the information you want. Perhaps some of our readers can tell you the name of an inexpensive book on heraldry?

"The Highdown Sisters." Neither Aunt Judy nor the translator of "Little Alvide" knew that another translation of the story had previously appeared in English, or it would not have been inserted; but the tale is such a pretty one that Aunt Judy can scarcely regret its reappearance, which may have introduced it to other readers, who, like herself have not seen it in "The Children's Prize." She thanks her young friends for their good wishes, and is thankful to say that she feels a little better than she did some months ago. Can any of our readers supply the origin of "Kettle-Drum," as applied to afternoon tea?

"Grace," and "One of the Blackberries of Bramble Hill," write to tell "W. A. F." that the Rev. Spenser Cantley is the author of the "Afterglow."

"The ripest of the four Blackberries of Bramble Hill" asks if any one will supply her with a "Purple Emperor" butterfly (and a female also, if possible). She offers a swallow-tail (*Papilio Machaon*) in exchange, or to pay a reasonable price.

"Edith Atkinson" offers 300 old penny postage stamps for fifty common foreign ones. Address, Saltwell Dene Cottage Saltwell Lane, Gateshead-on-Tyne.

"Mortimer Lightwood" asks whence come the following lines:

"In front, the sun climbs slow—how slowly!
But westward, look, the land is bright."

The quotation he inquires for from Milton occurs in "Paradise Lost," Book I., line 300:

"And call'd
His legions, angel forms, who lay entranc'd,
Thick as autumnal leaves that strow the brooks
In Vallombrosa, where th' Etrurian shades
High over-arch'd embow'r."

"Edith Mary." There is a good translation of Schiller's "Maria Stuart" by Joseph Mellish, published by Bell and Daldy in Bohn's Standard Library.

Aunt Judy is delighted to be able to give the following announcement from the Secretary of the Great Ormond Street Hospital, which she is confident will give universal pleasure to the supporters of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine" Cot. She has been for long, and is deeply gratified by the warm response with which her original appeal for the support of Aunt Judy's Cot has been received. Many touching communications have been made to her in consequence, and many affectionate ones also. She desires to assure her nephews and nieces that she feels very grateful to them both for falling in so generously with her views, and for the numerous expressions of affection towards herself. Let them accept these assurances with Aunt Judy's best love. She can safely say to them now with one of the classical poets:

"Not ignorant of pain, I myself learn to succour the afflicted."

She hopes that the next number will announce the first-fruits of contributions towards a cot for the Boys' Ward.

"It will afford the young friends satisfaction to know that the attainment of the object they have had in view during the past four years—the perpetual establishment of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot"—will be realized soon after these lines are in print. The gross amount

collected during the past four years is now upwards of 1000*l.*; but some deduction on account of expenses incurred (including the monthly supply of subscription papers) have to be made, which will leave the net amount now standing to the credit of the "Cot" fund the sum of 982*l.*

The Secretary can but reiterate the cordial thanks that have been repeatedly tendered to the contributors and to the Editor of 'Aunt Judy's Magazine' for their liberality, and the great interest that they have manifested in the Cot and its occupants; and congratulate the subscribers on the successful foundation of a permanent Cot for sick children."

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, March 15th, 1872.

In the last report little "Toby" was stated to be making good progress towards recovery: she has now been transferred to the Convalescent Branch at Cromwell House, Highgate. The morning of her departure from the Hospital was quite a marked one in the Girls' Ward: many visits were paid to Aunt Judy's Cot, and regrets expressed that the general favourite was leaving Great Ormond Street. But another question had to be decided before her departure, for an attempt was to be made to take a photograph of "Toby" as she lay in "Aunt Judy's Cot." After much extra curling of the sunny little locks, and the most suitable arrangement of attitude, with some lessons in remaining for a few seconds in the same position, a task of some difficulty when it is considered questionable whether or not Toby has ever been quiet for two consecutive minutes in her young life—all the efforts were doomed to prove fruitless: the brightest scarlet jacket, the loveliest curls, and the artist's successful arrangement of position, did not avail. Alas! there was no bright sky to send light

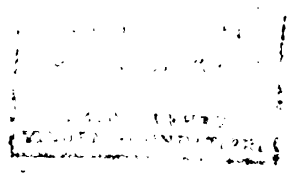
enough into the wards for a picture, and the little patient had to leave without her portrait being taken. Possibly an opportunity may be afforded on her return from Highgate, and the desire expressed by so many of Aunt Judy's readers for a photograph of the Cot will be gratified. It will interest some of the young friends to know that a beautiful photograph of the previous occupant of the Cot, little Annie H—, has been taken by Mr. Faulkner, and can be obtained of the Secretary for twelve postage stamps. It is a most successful likeness, and really an artistic picture.

On the day that "Toby" left the Hospital, "Aunt Judy's Cot" was taken possession of by Mary E—, who was admitted to the wards a short time previously. She is a little girl about nine years old, the child of an artilleryman at Woolwich. She was born at Gibraltar, and feels a certain dignity and importance attaching to the fact of her having come from that far-off place. She has been ill since last April, and has suffered a great deal; she was for some months a patient at the Military Hospital at Woolwich. Although at times suffering acute pain, she is very gentle and patient: her cough keeps her awake often at night, and she is sometimes much exhausted: she is, however, improving in health, and is now able to sit up supported by pillows, and amuse herself with a little needlework or a picture-book. She seems well satisfied with her present quarters, and the other day she announced (as though she could speak authoritatively, her Hospital experience being considerable) that she considered "there is no Hospital like this Hospital." Little Mary may not be able ever to run about and romp like the strong and hearty young readers of "Aunt Judy's Magazine," but it is hoped that she will recover sufficiently to return and again gladden the home of her parents.

<i>Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to March 15th, 1872.</i>	
	£ s. d.
A Mother and daughter, Penrith (annual)	0 10 0
Miss Parodi (annual)	0 5 0
Gertrude Atkinson, 13 Woodhouse Square, Leeds (annual)	1 1 0
Helen (collected quarterly) . . .	0 16 6
G. A. F. (January to March) (monthly)	0 7 0
Beaver (February and March) (monthly)	0 5 0
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie (monthly)	0 1 3
Susan and Harriet (monthly) . . .	0 2 0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0 1 0
Maude and Mildred, also a few violets for little Toby (monthly)	0 2 0
M. A. F. (three months) (monthly)	0 1 6
Little Etta (monthly)	0 0 6
Little Frankie, 41 King Henry's Road (monthly)	0 1 0
Margaret, Clara, and Esther, also a parcel of clothes, made during the Christmas holidays	0 2 6
Mrs. R. K. Inman, 10 Upper Hamilton Terrace	0 10 0
Miss E. M. Inman (ditto)	0 2 6
Christine	0 2 6
Jean and Lilie	0 2 0
Children, Solihull	0 4 4
Bessie Constance, 2s. 6d., Annie Louise, 2s. 6d., Halifax	0 5 0
The Children at Westwood House, Peterborough	0 5 0
A Travelled Monkey	0 2 0
Collected by Annie and Nellie, Hanley	0 4 0
F. S. W., Dublin	0 1 0
From a Grandmother	0 2 6
A. E. Crook, Eton	0 0 6
The New Forest Fox Hounds, 9s., Two Pugs, 1s.	0 10 0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Herbert and Lucy (collected)	0	5	0	"In memoriam, April 18th,			
Annie and Jimmie, Middleham	2	4	0	20th, 1871."	0	2	0
Aunt, Uncle, M. E. C., Lisa	0	6	0	"Darius and the Corrugated			
Bertie	0	0	2	Butcher"	0	0	5
J. H. B., Naples	0	10	0	Thedi, 6d., Daymora, 6d., Tibur,			
A. B., Naples	0	5	0	6d., earned by ditto, 1s.	0	2	6
Henry, Emily, Steenie, Lily and				Jack Hendimer, 6d., Emmie			
Maude, Berkeswell Rectory,				Hendimer, 3d., Ally Hen-			
Coventry	0	5	0	dimer, 3d.	0	1	0
Emily, Eustace, and Herbert S.,				"Five Orange Blossoms," with			
savings from pocket-money	0	2	6	a box of flowers, and "Dick,"			
George and Agatha Joliffe	0	7	6	a pair of socks, North Britain	0	2	6
The Gringoblius	0	2	0	The Boys of the Preparatory			
"Kitty," Queen's Gate	0	1	6	School, Reassall	0	4	0
E. O.	0	5	0	Ditto, F. Wheeler, 6d., S. Cot-			
Lilian, Hélène, and Ada	0	5	0	ton, 6d.	0	1	0
Little H. H. E., Wisbeach	0	2	6	John, 6d., Granny, 6d., Kath-			
A. W. O.	0	1	0	leen, 6d.	0	1	6
Winifred Ashford	0	2	6	Part of contents of Edith			
Ellie and Violet	0	2	0	Beatrice Mia's money-box	0	1	8
"Daddy Boy," Aylesbury	0	2	0	Gertrude M. Gwyn, Great Mar-			
A. M. N., 9d., G. H. N., 6d.,				low	0	1	0
T. F. N., 6d., E. M. N., 3d.,				Katie (collected)	0	2	7
Yarmouth, Norfolk	0	2	0	Katharine L. Broke, 1s., Harry			
Profits from the sale of Con-				Broke, 6d., Philip Broke, 6d.	0	2	0
stance and Kate Pearson's				Madge, High Cross	0	0	9
fancy-work Bazaar at Home,				Mamma and Kathleen	0	6	0
Lindrick House	2	7	3	Margaret, Dora, Mabel, and			
M. M. P., Wimborne, Dorset	0	5	0	little Maudie, 4, Cromwell			
From a constant reader of				Gardens	0	4	0
"Aunt Judy"	0	1	6	A Travelled Monkey	0	2	6
Tom Tit	0	10	0	Dame Durden	0	2	6
M. T., York	0	2	6	Kathleen and Evelyn	0	1	10
Ida, Streatham Hill	0	5	0	Two little Doves	0	1	0
L. B. Fawens	0	1	0	Sissy, a birthday remembrance			
Kittie, South-shore, Blackpool	0	6	2	for Toby and Alexandrine,			
Ramsay and Ursula	0	2	0	dolls and comforters, the Hall,			
The pupils at Cambridge House,				Brampton Bryan.			
Bury, Lancashire	2	5	0	"Days at Leighscombe," from			
"Aliky Jack"	0	2	0	the authoress.			







SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XI.

THOMAS, THE CAT.—MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER'S SKETCHES.—ADOLPHE IS MY FRIEND.—MY GREAT-GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER DISTURBS MY REST.—
I LEAVE THE VINE.



Y great-grandfather had, as I said, some skill in painting. He was gifted with an intense sense of, and love for colour. I am sure he saw colours where other people did not. What to common eyes was a mass of grey, or green, was to him a pleasant combination of many gay and delicate hues. He distinguished severally the innumerable bright threads in nature's coat of many colours, and in simple truth I think that each was a separate joy to him.

He had a white Angora cat of an artistic temperament, which followed him in his walks, dozed on the back of his armchair, and condescended to share his tea when it reached a certain moderate temperature. It never was betrayed into excitement, except when there was fish for dinner. My great-grandfather's fasts were feasts for Thomas, the cat.

I can very clearly remember the sight of my great-grandfather pacing slowly up and down the tiny garden at The Vine, his hands behind him, and followed sedately by Thomas. Now and then he would stop to gaze, with infinite contentment in his eyes, at the delicate blue-grey mist behind the leafless trees (which in that spring sunshine were, no doubt, of much more complex and beautiful colour to him than mere brown), or drinking in the blue of the scillas in the border with a sigh of satisfaction. When he paused, Thomas would pause; as he feasted his eyes, Thomas would rub his head against his master's legs, and stretch his own. When Elspeth had cooked the fish, and my great-grandmother had made the tea and arranged the flowers on the table, they would come in together and condescend to their breakfasts, with the same air about them both of having no responsibility in life but to find out sunny spots, and to enjoy themselves.

My great-grandfather's most charming paintings were sketches of flowers. Ordinary stiff flower paintings are of all paintings the most uninteresting, I think; but his were of a very different kind. Each sketch was a sort of idyll. Indeed he would tell me stories of

each as he showed them. Long as my great-grandfather had lived, he was never a robust man, and Elspeth's chief ideas on the subject of his sketches bore reference to the colds he had caught, and the illnesses he had induced, by sitting in the east winds, or lying on damp grass to do this or that sketch.

"That'll be the one the master did before he was laid by with the rheumatics," Elspeth said, when I described one of my favourites to her. It was a spring sketch. My great-grandfather had lain face downwards on the lawn to do it. This was to bring his eyes on a level with the subject of his painting, which was this: a crocus of the exquisite shades of lilac to be seen in some varieties, just full-blown, standing up in its first beauty and freshness from its fringe of narrow silver-striped leaves. The portrait was not an opaque and polished-looking painting on smooth cardboard, but a sketch—indefinite at the outer edges of the whole subject—on water-colour paper of moderate roughness. The throat and part of the cup of the flower stood out from some shadow at the roots of a plant beyond; a shadow of infinite gradation, and quite without the blackness common to patches of shade as seen by untrained eyes. From the level of my great-grandfather's view, as he lay in the grass, the border looked a mere strip; close behind it was a hedge dividing the garden from a field. Just by the crocus there was a gap in the hedge, which in the sketch was indicated rather than drawn. And round the corner of the bare thorn branches from the hedge-bank in the field there peeped a celandine and a daisy. They were not nearly such finished portraits as that of the crocus. A few telling strokes of colour made them, and gave them a life and pertness that was clever enough. Beneath the sketch was written, "*La Demoiselle. Des enfants du village la regardent.*"

My great-grandfather translated this for me, and used to show me how the "little peasants," Marguerite and Celandine, were peeping in at the pretty young lady in her mauve dress striped with violet.

But every sketch had its story, and often its moral; not, as a rule, a very original one. In one, a lovely study of ivy crept over a rotten branch upon the ground. A crimson toadstool relieved the heavy green, and suggested that the year was drawing to a close. Beneath it was written, "*Charity.*" "Thus," said my great-grandfather, "one covers up and hides the defects of one he loves."

A study of gaudy summer tulips stood—as may be guessed—for Pride.

"Pride," said my great-grandfather, "is a sin; a mortal sin, dear child. Moreover, it is foolish, and also vulgar—the pride of fine clothes, money, equipages, and the like. What is called pride of birth—the dignity of an ancient name—this, indeed, is another thing. It is not petty, not personal; it seems to me more like patriotism, the pride of country."

I did my best to describe to Elspeth both the sketch and my great-grandfather's commentary.

"A' pride's sinful," said Elspeth, decidedly. "Pride o' wealth, and pride o' birth. Not that I'm for objecting to a decent satisfaction in a body's ain gude conduct and respectability. Pride o' character, that's anither thing a'thegither, and to be respectit."

My great-grandfather gave me a few paints, and under his directions I daubed away, much to my own content. When I was struggling hopelessly with the perspective of some pansies of various colours (for in imitation of him I painted flowers), he would say, "Never mind the shape, dear Marguerite, get the colour—the colour, my child!" And he trained me to a quickness in the perception of colour certainly not common at my age.

I spent many pleasant hours, too, in the less intellectual society of Adolphe. He dug a bed for me in a bit of spare ground, and shaped it like a heart. He laboured constantly at this heart, making it plump by piling up the earth, and cramming it with plants of various kinds—perennials much in want of subdivision, and often in full bloom—which he brought from cottage gardens of "folk he knew," and watered copiously to "sattle 'em."

His real name was not Adolphe, but Thomas. As this, however, had created some confusion between him and the cat, my great-grandmother had named him afresh, after a retainer of the de Vandaleurs in days gone by, whose faithful service was a tradition in the family.

I was very happy at The Vine—by day. I feel ashamed now to recall how miserable I was at night, and yet I know I could not help it. In old times I had always been accustomed to be watched to sleep by Ayah. After I came to Aunt Theresa, I slept in the same room with one or more of the other children. At The Vine, for the first time, I slept alone.

This was not all. It was not merely the being alone in the dark which frightened me. Indeed, a curious little wick floating on a cup of oil was lighted at night for my benefit, but it only illumined the great source of the terror which made night hideous to me.

Some French refugee artist, who had been indebted to my great-grandparents for kindness, had shown his gratitude by painting a picture of the execution of that Duc de Vandaleur who perished in the Revolution, my great-grandfather having been the model. It was a wretched daub, but the subject was none the less horrible for that, and the caricatured likeness to my great-grandfather did not make it seem less real or more pleasant.

That execution which never was over, this ghastly head which never found rest in the grave, that awful-looking man who was, and yet was not, grandpapa—haunted me. They were the cause of certain horrible dreams, which I can remember quite as clearly at this day as if I dreamed them last night, and which I know I shall never forget. The dreams again associated themselves with the picture, and my fears grew instead of lessening as the time went by.

Very late one night Elspeth came in and found me awake, and probably looking far from happy. I had nothing to say for myself, but I burst into tears. Elspeth was tenderness itself, but she got hold of a wrong idea. I was "just homesick," she thought, and needed to be "away home again," with "bairns like myself."

I do not know why I never explained the real reason of my distress—children are apt to be reticent on such occasions. I think a panic seized upon the members of the household, that they were too old to make a child happy. I was constantly assured that "it was very natural," and I "had been very good." But I was sent back to Rifebury. No one knew how loth I was to leave, still less that it was to a much older relative than those at The Vine that I owed my expulsion—to my great-great-great-grandfather—Monsieur le Duc de Vandaleur.

Thomas, the cat, purred so loudly as I withdrew, that I think he was glad to be rid of me.

Adolphe alone was against the verdict of the household, and I think believed that I would have preferred to remain.

"I'm sure I thought you was quite sattled, miss," he said, as he saw me off; and he blubbered like a baby. His transplanted perennials

were "sattled" by copious floods of water. Perhaps he hoped that tears would settle me!

CHAPTER XII.

MARIA'S NEWS.—OUR GOVERNESS.—MAJOR BULLER TURNED TUTOR.

THE grief I felt at leaving The Vine was greatly forgotten in the warm welcome which awaited me on my return to Rifebury.

In a household where gossip is a principal amusement, the return of any member from a visit is a matter for general congratulation till the new budget is exhausted. Indeed, I plead guilty to a liking to be the first to skim the news, when Eleanor or one of the boys comes back from a visit, at the present time.

Maria withdrew me from Aunt Theresa as soon as she could.

"I am so glad to get you back, Margery dear," said she. "And now you must tell me all your news, and I'll tell you all mine. And to begin with—what do you think?—we've got a governess, and you and I are to have the little room at the head of the stairs all to ourselves."

Maria's news was lengthy enough, and interesting enough to make us late for tea, and mine kept us awake for a couple of hours after we were fairly in our two little iron bedsteads in the room that was now our very own. That is to say, I told what I had to tell after we came to bed, but my news was so tame compared with Maria's that we soon returned to the discussion of hers. I tried to describe my great-grandfather's sketches, but neither Aunt Theresa in the drawing-room, nor Maria when we retired for the night, seemed to feel any interest in the subject; and when Mrs. Buller asked what sort of people called at The Vine, I felt that my reply was, like the rest of my news, but dull.

Maria's, on the contrary, was very entertaining. She spoke enthusiastically of Miss Perry, the governess.

"She is so good-natured, Margery, you can't think. When lessons are over she takes me walks on the Esplanade, and she calls me her dear Maria, and I take her arm, and she tells me all about herself. She says she knows she's very romantic. And she's got lots of secrets, and she's told me several already; for she says she has a feeling that I can keep a secret, and so I can; but telling you's not

telling, you know, because she's sure to tell you herself, only you'd better wait till she does before you say anything, for fear she should be vexed."

Of course I promised to do so, and craned my neck out of bed to catch Maria's interesting but whispered revelations.

Maria herself was only partially in Miss Perry's confidence, and I looked anxiously forward to the time when she would admit me also to her secrets, though I feared she might consider me too young. My fears were groundless, as I found Miss Perry was fond of talking about herself, and a suitable audience was quite a secondary consideration with her.

She was a protégée of Mrs. Minchin's, who had persuaded Aunt Theresa to take her for our governess. She was quite unfit for the position, and did no little harm to us in her brief reign. But I do not think that our interests had entered in the least into Mrs. Minchin's calculations in the matter. She had "taken Miss Perry up," and to get Miss Perry a comfortable home was her sole object.

To do our new governess justice, she did her best to impart her own superficial acquirements to us. We plodded regularly through French exercises, which she corrected by a key, and she kept us at work for a given number of hours during the day; tatting by our sides as we practised our scales, or roasting her petticoats over the fire, whilst Maria and I read Mrs. Markham's "England," or Mrs. Trimmer's "Bible Lessons" aloud by turns to full stops. But when lessons were over, Miss Perry was quite as glad as we were, and the subjects of our studies had as little to do with our holiday hours as a Sunday sermon with the rest of the week.

She was a great novel reader, and I think a good many of the things she told us of, as having happened to herself, had their real origin in the Riflebury circulating library. For she was one of those strange characters who indulge in egotism and exaggeration, till they seem positively to lose the sense of what is fact and what is fiction.

She filled our poor empty little heads with a great deal of folly, and it was well for us that her reign was not a long one. She was clever enough not to display her romantic side to Mrs. Buller, who for some time had no doubts as to the wisdom of Mrs. Minchin's choice. She amused her too with Riflebury gossip, in which she was an adept. She knew equally well how far she might venture with the Major;

and the sleight of hand with which she threw needlework over a novel when Aunt Theresa came into the schoolroom was not more skilful than the way in which she turned the tail of a bit of scandal into a remark upon the weather as Major Buller opened the drawing-room door.

But Miss Perry was not skilful enough to win the Major's favour. He was always slow to interfere in domestic matters, but he was not unobservant.

"I'm sure you see a great deal more than one would think, Edward," Aunt Theresa would say; "although you are so wrapt up in insects and things."

"The insects don't get into my eyes, my dear," said Major Buller.

"And hear too," Mrs. Buller continued. "Mrs. O'Connor was saying only the other day that you often seem to hear of things before other people, though you do talk so little."

"It is, perhaps, because I am not always talking that I do hear. But Mrs. O'Connor is not likely to think of that," said the Major, rather severely.

He was neither blind nor deaf in reference to Miss Perry, and she was dismissed. Aunt Theresa rather dreaded Mrs. Minchin's indignation in the matter, I believe, but needlessly, for Miss Perry and Mrs. Minchin quarrelled about this time, and Mrs. Minchin had then so much information to Miss Perry's disadvantage at her fingers' ends, that it seemed wonderful that she should ever have recommended her.

For some little time our education progressed in a very desultory fashion. Major Buller became perversely prejudiced against governesses, and for a short time undertook to carry on our English lessons himself. He made sums amusing, and geography lessons "as good as stories," though the latter so often led (by very interesting channels) to his dearly beloved insects, that Mrs. Buller accused him of making our lessons an excuse for getting out his "collection."

With "grammar" we were less successful. Major Buller was so good a teacher that he brought out what intelligence we possessed, and led us constantly to ask questions about anything we failed to understand. In arithmetic this led to his helping us over our difficulties; in geography it led, sooner or later, to the "collection;" but in English grammar it led to stumbling-blocks and confusion, and

finally, to the Major's throwing the book across the room, and refusing to pursue that part of our education any further.

"I never learnt English grammar," said the Major, "and it's quite evident that I can't teach it."

"If *you* don't know grammar, papa, then *we* needn't," said Maria, promptly, and being neat of disposition, she picked up the book and proceeded to put it away.

"I never said that I didn't know grammar," said the Major; "I fancy I can speak and write grammatically, but what I know I got from the Latin grammar. And, upon my soul," added Uncle Buller, pulling at his heavy moustache, "I don't know why you shouldn't do the same."

The idea of learning Latin pleased us greatly, and Major Buller (who had been at the Charter House in his boyhood) bought a copy of Dr. Russell's grammar, and we set to work. And either because the rules of the Latin grammar bore explanation better than the English ones, or because Major Buller was better able to explain them, we had no further difficulties.

We were very proud of doing lessons in these circumstances, and boasted of our Latin lessons, I remember, to the little St. Quintins, when we met them at the dancing class. The St. Quintins were slender, ladylike girls, very much alike, and rendered more so by an exact similarity of costume. Their governess was a very charming and talented woman, and when Mrs. St. Quentin proposed that Maria and I should share her daughters' French lessons under Miss Airlie, Major Buller and Aunt Theresa thankfully accepted the offer. I think that our short association with this excellent lady went far to cure us of the silly notions and tricks of vulgar gossip which we had gleaned from Miss Perry.

So matters went on for some months, much to Maria's and my satisfaction, when a letter from my other guardian changed our plans once more.

CHAPTER XIII.

ELEANOR ARKWRIGHT.—THE CAVALRY LADY.—A "REAL REMBRANDT."

MR. ARKWRIGHT'S only daughter was going to school. He had written to ask the Bullers to let her break the journey by spending a night at their house. It was a long journey, for she was coming from the north.

"They live in Yorkshire," said Major Buller, much as one might speak of living in Central Africa.

Maria and I looked forward with great interest to Miss Arkwright's arrival. Her name, we learnt, was Eleanor, and she was nearly a year older than Maria.

"She'll be *your* friend, I suppose," I said, a little enviously, in reference to her age.

"Of course," said Maria, with dignity. "But you can be with us a good deal," she was kind enough to add.

I remember quite well how disappointed I felt that I should have so little title to share the new comer's friendship.

"If she had only been ten years old and so come between us," I thought, "she would have been as much mine as Maria's."

I little thought then what friends we were to be in spite of the five years difference in age. Indeed, both Maria and I were destined to see more of her than we expected. Aunt Theresa and Major Buller came to a sudden resolution to send us also to the school where she was going, though we did not hear of this at first.

Long afterwards, when we were together, Eleanor asked me if I could remember my first impression of her. For our affection's sake I wish it had been a picturesque one; but truth obliges me to confess that, when our visitor did at last arrive, Maria and I were chiefly struck by the fact that she wore thick boots, and did not wear crinoline.

And yet, looking back, I have a very clear picture of her in my mind, standing in the passage by her box (a very rough one, very strongly corded, and addressed in the clearest of handwriting), purse in hand, and paying the cabman with perfect self-possession. An upright, quite ladylike, but rather old-fashioned little figure, somewhat quaint from the simplicity of her dress. She had a rather quaint face too, with a nose slightly turned up, a prominent forehead, a charming mouth, and most beautiful dark eyes. Her hair was rolled under and tied at the top of her head, and it had an odd tendency to go astray about the parting.

This was, perhaps, partly from a trick she seemed to have of doing her hair away from the looking-glass. She stood to do it, and also (on one leg) to put on her shoes and stockings, which amused us. But she was always on her feet, and seemed unhappy if she sat idle. We

took her for a walk the morning after her arrival, and walked faster than we had ever walked before to keep pace with our new friend, who strode along in her thick boots and undistended skirts with a step like that of a kilted Highlander.

When we came into the town, however, she was quite willing to pause before the shop windows, which gave her much entertainment.

"I'm afraid I should always be looking in at the windows if I lived in a town," she said, "there are such pretty things."

Eleanor laughs when I remind her of that walk, and how we stood still by every chemist's door because she liked the smell. When anything interested her, she stopped, but at other times she walked as if she were on the road to some given place, and determined to be there in good time; or perhaps it would be more just to say that she walked as if walking were a pleasure to her. It was walking—not strolling. When she was out alone, I know that she constantly ran when other people would have walked. It is a north country habit, I think. I have seen middle-aged Scotch and Yorkshire ladies run as lightly as children.

It was not the fashionable time of day, so that we could not, during that walk, show Eleanor the chief characters of Riflebury. But just as we were leaving High Street she stopped and asked, "Who is that lady?"

"The one in the mauve silk?" said Maria. "That is one of the cavalry ladies. All the cavalry ladies dress grandly."

It was a Mrs. Perowne. She was sailing languidly down the other side of the street, in a very large crinoline, and a very long dress of pale silk, which floated after her along the dirty pavement, much, I remember, to my admiration. Above this was some tight-fitting thing with a good deal of lace about it, which was crowned by a fragile and flowing bonnet, and such a tuft of white lace at the end of a white stick as just sheltered her nose, which was aquiline, from the sunshine. She was prettily dressed for an open barouche, a flower-show, or a wedding breakfast; for walking through the streets of a small, dirty town, to change her own books at the library, her costume was ludicrously out of place, though at the time I thought it enviably grand. The way in which a rich skirt that would not wash, and would undoubtedly be worn again, trailed through dust and orange-peel, and greengrocers' refuse, and general shop-sweepings, was offensive to cleanliness alone.

"Is she ill?" Eleanor asked.

"No," said Maria; "I don't think so. Why?"

"She walks so slowly," said Eleanor, gazing anxiously at Mrs. Perowne out of her dark eyes, "and she is so white in the face."

"Oh, my dear!" said Maria, laughing, "that's puff—puff, and a white veil. It's to make her look young. I heard Mrs. Minchin tell mamma that she knew she was thirty-seven at least. But she dresses splendidly. If you stay over Sunday, you'll see her close, for she sits in front of us in church. And she has such a splendid big scent-bottle, with gold tops, and such a lovely, tiny little prayer-book, bound in blue velvet, and a watch no bigger than a shilling, with a monogram on the back. She took it out several times in the sermon last Sunday, so I saw it. But isn't her hair funny?"

"It's a beautiful colour," said Eleanor, "only it looks different in front. But I suppose that's the veil."

"No, it isn't," said Maria; "that's the new colour for hair, you know. It's done by stuff you put on; but Miss Perry said the worst was, it didn't always come out the same all over. Lots of ladies use it."

"How horrid!" said Eleanor. "But what makes her walk so slow?"

"Well, I don't know," said Maria. "Why should she walk quick?"

Eleanor seemed struck by this reply, and after a few minutes' pause, said very gently, with a slight blush on her cheeks, "I'm afraid I have been walking too fast for you. I'm used to walking with boys."

We earnestly assured her that this was not the case, and that it was much better fun to walk with her than with Miss Perry, who used to daudle so that we were often thoroughly chilled.

In the afternoon we took her to the Esplanade, when Maria, from her knowledge of the people, took the lead in the conversation. I was proud to walk on the other side of our new friend, with my best doll in my arms. Aunt Theresa came with us, but she soon sat down to chat to a friend, and we three strolled up and down together. I remember a pretty bit of trimming on Eleanor's hat being blown by the wind against her face, on which she quietly seized it, and stuffed it securely into the band.

"Oh, my dear," said Maria, "don't do that. It looks so pretty; and you're crushing it dreadfully."

"It got in my eyes," said Eleanor, briefly. "I hate tags."

We went home before Aunt Theresa, but as we stood near the door, Eleanor lingered and looked wistfully up the road, which ran over a slight hill towards the open country.

"Would you like to stay out a little longer?" we politely asked.

"I should rather like to go to the top of the hill," said Eleanor. "Don't you think flat ground tires one? Shall we race up?" she added.

We willingly agreed. I had a few yards start of Eleanor, and Maria rather less, and away we went. But we were little used to running, and hoops and thin boots were not in our favour. Eleanor beat us, of course. She seemed in no way struck by the view from the top. Indeed it was not particularly pretty.

"It's very flat about here," she said. "There are no big hills you can get to the top of, I suppose?"

We confessed that there were not, and there being nothing more to do, we ran down again, and went indoors.

Eleanor dressed for the evening in her usual peripatetic way, and, armed with a homely-looking piece of grey knitting, followed us downstairs.

Her superabundant energy did not seem to find vent in conversation. We were confidential enough now to tell each other of our homes, and she had sat so long demurely silent, that Maria ventured upon the inquiry,

"Don't you talk much, at your home?"

"Oh yes," said Eleanor, "at least, when we've anything to say;" and I am sure no irony was intended in the reply.

"What are you knitting, my dear?" said Aunt Theresa.

"A pair of socks for my brother Jack," was the reply.

"I'm sure you're dreadfully industrious," said Mrs. Buller.

A little later she begged Eleanor to put it away.

"You'll tire your eyes, my dear, I'm sure; pray rest a little, and chat to us."

"I don't look at my knitting," said Eleanor; but she put it away, and then sat looking rather red in the face, and somewhat encumbered with her empty hands, which were red too.

I think Uncle Buller noticed this; for he told us to get the big scrap-book and show it to Miss Arkwright.

Eleanor got cool again over this; but she said little till, pausing

before a small, black-looking print in a sheet full of rather coarse coloured caricatures, cuttings from illustrated papers and old fashion-books, second-rate lithographs, and third-rate original sketches, fitted into a close patchwork, she gave a sort of half-repressed cry.

"My dear! What is it?" cried Maria.

"I think," said Eleanor, looking for information to Aunt Theresa, "I think it's a real Rembrandt, isn't it?"

"A real what, my dear?" said Mrs. Buller.

"One of Rembrandt's etchings," said Eleanor; "and of course I don't know, but I think it must be an original; it's so beautifully done, and my mother has a copy of this one. We know ours is a copy, and I think this must be an original, because all the things are turned the other way; and it's very old, and it's beautifully done," Eleanor repeated, with her face over the little black print.

Major Buller came across the room, and sat down by her.

"You are fond of drawing?" he said.

"Very," said Eleanor, and she threw a good deal of eloquence into the one word.

The Major and she forthwith plunged into a discussion of drawing, etching, line engraving, etc., etc. It appeared that Mrs. Arkwright etched on copper, and had a good collection of old etchings, with which Eleanor was familiar. It also transpired that she was a naturalist, which led by easy stages to a promise from the Major to show Eleanor his insects.

They talked till bedtime, and when Aunt Theresa bade us good-night, she said,

"I'm glad you've found your voice, my dear;" and she added, laughing, "but whenever papa talks to anybody it always ends in the collection."

(To be continued.)



THIS LIFE TOO SWEET.



GOD, my life is very glad,
 I could not wish it more:
 Thy hand with good has compassed all
 Behind me and before.
 Health bounds within my veins, O Lord,
 And loving friends are mine,
 And youth and hope and easy ways
 In golden summershine.


I know that these are all Thy gifts,
 For which my praise is due,
 And yet I tremble when I count
 Their gracious number too:
 For ah, too well I know the voice
 Of conscience, sad and grave,
 "These things, vain heart! have been thy gods,
 And not the God who gave."

O Father! save me from myself,
 Save from the bitter snare
 That I should find my treasure here,
 And miss it ever there.
 Send joy or sorrow; as my day
 I know my strength shall be:
 Do with me as Thou wilt, but make
 Me find my all in Thee.

So when at last I trembling move
 To face the great Unknown,
 With all the fairest things of earth
 Far, far beneath me thrown;
 O may it be to find a home
 Long sought in eager prayer,
 To find a friend long known and dear,
 My God and Saviour, there.

M. M. M.

A MAY-DAY STORY.

 ALL Agatha knew about May, was, that the sun shone brighter in the streets, that the air was warmer, that she and her little brothers were taken oftener by nurse into the gardens, which, in spite of the tall gloomy houses that shut them in, could not help giving spring some sort of a welcome, the lilac-bushes pushing out tender leaves and blossoms, too soon covered with blacks, and the rooks cawing noisily, where big trees grew above the incessant roll of carriages, and cries of people in the streets. You see, poor Agatha lived in London, and spring hedges and banks, meadows and woods, were like a book to her she might dream of, but never open. She had been in the country sometimes, but never for long together, and these short visits were the bright spots of her life. She was perfectly happy at home, loving her father and mother with all the warmth of her loving little heart, and her many little brothers too, among whom she was the only sister. Her father was a clergyman, hard at work all day among the poor people, who suffer so much in their hot crowded alleys, and who, with little but misery and sin and destitution around them, do indeed need such a kind friend as Agatha's father, to go in and out among them, a messenger of the good God, to show them the way to a better and happier life. Agatha's mother loved her little girl tenderly, but a busy clergyman's wife has not much time to herself, and little Aggie often had to sit still for hours, while she wrote busily, or went out visiting the poor, where Aggie might not go with her. And so it was, that Agatha grew up rather silent, very thoughtful, and a little lonely, the only girl among so many brothers, older and younger, and at nine years old she was pining more than ever for the country, longing for the woods and fields and flowers she read about, and when March brought violets into Covent Garden, and she sometimes saw them carried about in the streets, a great sigh would come to see them growing, and pick them for herself.

May-day in London would be a dull affair indeed, and as you see my story promises to be about May-day, I suppose you have guessed Agatha had her wish after all, and went down into the country? Well, this is how it came about—one day at breakfast, Mother opened a

letter from aunt Mary, who lived in Sussex, and smiling happily as she handed it to her husband to read, said, "What do you say to spending some weeks at Ashgrove, Aggie? wouldn't you like it?"

Aggie's "Oh! Mother," and suddenly red cheeks were answer enough. The letter said, "You tell me Aggie grows tall and pale, your own fault for keeping her shut up in London, when we are longing to have her. Send her to stay till she is tired of us, and I promise the country air and our breezy downs shall put some colour in her face, before she has been here long," and at the end, another message was read aloud to Agatha, to the effect that May-day was a great day among the children of Ashgrove, and Agatha was to come as long before, as she could be sent, but on no account to wait till after the day was past. And so before long, it was all settled, only poor little Agatha could not help feeling, if only her Father and Mother and her brothers could go too; it seemed so selfish to go and leave them all in hot, smoky, dirty, London—But Mother kissed the tears away that would hang on Aggie's eyelashes, and said:—

"What would your Father do without me, darling? I could not leave him, and he could not leave his poor people, and the little brothers who are not at school are too young to go out visiting. I can trust my Aggie alone, and who knows, that she may not stay so long, that Father may get his holiday, and we both come and fetch her?"

It was about the middle of April when Agatha started on her journey *alone*. She was not frightened, for she had learnt to do many things for herself, and was more independent than most children of her age, and her Father and Mother could rely on her doing whatever they told her, the guard had promised to look after her, and the journey was but a short one.

How strange it seemed to Agatha to be flying, as it were, over the heads of the houses, catching sudden glimpses of crowded streets, with their hurrying, noisy passengers far below, or peeping in through the dim window of some garret which was on a level with her eyes, where perhaps some sickly plants in cracked and broken pots on the window-sill, might have told her that the inmate remembered the fresh, pure country, and longed for it too! In dirty little open squares of ground before or behind the gloomy houses she was hurrying past, poor little ragged children played and looked up with a faint hurrah and waving of arms as the monster train rushed by. Ah! what stories of lives

Agatha passed, in those grim houses all crowded together, overlooking the great iron highway that was never still! what pain and sorrow, what aching limbs and hearts were shut in by those sad walls, what bright deeds shone in the darkness, seen only by angel eyes!

But Aggie thought of none of these things, her mind was running upon Ashgrove, and wondering what her many little cousins were grown like; she had not seen them for a long time, but her uncle and aunt she knew well, they had been staying in London not long ago, and part of the time in Aggie's home. But all her busy thoughts did not hinder a growing pleasure to see they were gradually getting clear of the town, and coming into the country. Pleasant fields, all gay with April's smiles and tears, the tender green of early spring on trees and hedges, the bright blue sky, with fleecy clouds skimming gently over it, making flying shadows over the broad landscape, all spoke to the town child of such deep, pure joy, that she could not help the tears coming into her eyes, she scarcely knew why.

"O!" she thought too, "If only Willie and baby Robert could see the little lambs at play in the fields, scampering away so frightened at the train, how they would clap their hands at the curling white steam and cry, 'Puff, puff.'"

She was soon lost again in watching this pure white smoke, and wondering where it went to, melting away so quickly against the blue sky, when she felt the train was slackening speed, and soon stopped altogether, though there was no station, only a platform by the side of the train.

Quick as lightning Agatha counted her packages, one, two, three, and grasping them stood upright, waiting for her friend, the guard, to come and take her out. But he did not come, and the train beginning to move slowly on, Aggie popped her little head out in a fright, and cried out, "O! stop! stop, please! I've got to get out!" But the train went on just the same, till it glided into a station after a few moments. Flurried and anxious, she stood ready, when the guard really did appear, and cried with a breath of relief, "O! I thought you had forgotten I had to get out!"

"Not yet, not yet, missy!" answered the man kindly, not for more than an hour yet; I shan't forget you, don't be afraid!" and then he told her the name of the place, and advised her, as they waited several minutes, to eat the buns her Mother had given her.

Before long they were on their way again, and, it seemed to Agatha, flying over the country faster than ever. She enjoyed it extremely, and did not the least want the journey to be over; indeed, as she felt it must be coming to an end, she began to be nervous at the idea of meeting her uncle and aunt, and to wish she could still go on, looking out at the bright country that changed every minute, and yet was always the same—beautiful parts of one great whole. On, on they went, over plains and marshes, wide flats where galloping horses, and great horned cattle looked up at the train, and either placidly stared at it, or scampered away, as they were accustomed to it or not; on, on, over brooks where the willow was spreading green arms to the sparkling water below, and where a water-rat would jump in with a great splash, or a moor-hen swim briskly down, over ploughed fields, where men were busy at work, their patient teams standing beside them; then came pleasant villages that nestled among trees, round the spire that always rose and pointed, all day long, above. There were pictures here of happier children than those she had hurried by when she began her journey. Sometimes she saw them come trooping out of the school-house, or standing, with smiling faces, at their cottage doors, calling to little brothers or sisters within, to come and watch the train too. But all these pleasant peeps were gone in a moment, and fresh ones came to put their remembrance out of her mind. It seemed she was at Woodgate too soon, and saw her uncle and aunt standing on the platform, waiting to welcome her, and beyond the palings a pony-carriage with a little girl in it, waiting for them to come up. It was her eldest cousin, Emma, and the two children were soon packed safe up in the back seat, and with Agatha's uncle and aunt before, driving through pleasant lanes, with high banks on either side, and flowers, flowers everywhere. Nobody can tell the delight it was to her, or how she marked each tiny plant, and nothing escaped her eager eye. She did not enjoy it the less that she did not speak much; indeed, she felt she never could give words to the joy of her heart, to feel her dream of the country at last realized. Besides that, her new cousin made her feel rather shy, and beyond comparing names and ages, they did not get much farther, before they arrived at Ashgrove Rectory, and driving through the wide open gates, stopped at the front door. It took Agatha much less time to notice the house and garden, than it does me to describe it; she saw a gabled red house before her, with a low porch,

covered with creepers, not in blossom yet, but fresh and green. To the right sloped away a large flat garden, where trim beds made bright patches of colour on the smooth turf, and many an old tree spread its ivy-covered arms, that had braved the winds of long years, and dated with the old house. On one side, the rooms opened to the lawn, and looked across all this smooth, bright garden, to where, at the end, the tower of the beautiful old church rose, a grand memorial of the piety of bygone days. On the other side of the house, divided by the carriage drive from the larger part of the garden, was another smooth, even lawn, with *such* a horse-chestnut tree in the centre, whose branches stretched high, and spread far over the green turf, a tree such as one seldom sees! Behind it, and round this side of the garden, was a wall, dividing the rectory grounds from the village, which lay all on that side. Behind the tree was an old doorway in the wall, which led away to a large court-yard behind the house, and rambling stables, coach-houses, and all manner of delightful places for children to run about, and hide in.

Agatha's quiet eyes took in a great deal of this, as she got out of the carriage, and stood on the gravel walk, while her aunt bustled about a little, getting out her wraps and parcels. There seemed a sweet scent in the air to her fancy, she heard the gentle humming of bees, the monotonous, soothing sound of pigeons in the stable yard, and, from a distance, came the merry shouts of children at their play, on the village green. After the London noises, it seemed very peaceful to her, and she felt very happy. It was not many days before Agatha was thoroughly at home here, and enjoying the country life with all the depth and earnestness of her nature, but she did not forget the kind Father and Mother, and little brothers at home. In the midst of her pleasures she always thought of them, and in her simple way, wrote accounts of everything she saw and did, making them happy in her happiness too.

The great event of spring, to the Ashgrove children, was May-day, when a grand may-pole was reared on the village green, and gentle and simple, all the little people gathered together, and danced round and round it. The cousins were always talking of this day, but it was a fortnight yet to wait; in the meantime, I must tell you some of Agatha's pleasures, and leave that great May-day for the last. First of all, to make you understand all the rest, I ought to tell you more about these

cousins, now you know what their home was like. There were six great fat children, with red cheeks, that told of running about, and country air—three girls and three boys, Arthur, Edward, and Emma being older, Sybil, Robert, and Blanche younger. Poor little Robert was an exception to the rest of the family. He was always weak and ailing, and his white face bore a constant look of suffering, but was very patient nevertheless. He was generally wheeled about in a little chair, pushed from behind, and Agatha, in her quieter nature, used to fancy the brothers and sisters were not as kind to this poor little crippled brother as they might have been. They never meant to be unkind, but in their high spirits they sometimes forgot him, and their noisy games would make him glad to creep away without a word, to his quiet solitary amusements. He was just six, and a great friendship had sprung up between him and his thoughtful, quiet cousin Agatha, who would often rather sit with him, and look up dreamily into the sky, and watch the floating clouds, than join in her other cousins' hare-and-hounds, as they rushed wildly over the garden and grounds, in the full glee of youth and health. Agatha used to tell him stories, as she told the little ones at home, which she had a nervous dread of the others hearing, since the bigger boys had once overheard, and laughed at her, not really unkindly, but in a fashion she was not used to, and could not understand or take as it was meant; nor did they understand the shy, quiet child, thinking sometimes her retiring habits were town-bred, not to say "stuck-up." And so it was that Agatha often stole away to be quiet little Robin's companion, when the sport was too rough for her, or the screaming and laughing too loud; and the children let her go with a smile among themselves at her 'town ways.'

But you must not think Agatha's enjoyment was any the less, that it was of a quieter kind; I think it was all the greater; and no one who had seen her standing on the breezy common they often walked to, with her hair all blown about her face, drinking in the fresh air that came blowing off the sea, which shone glittering in the distance—no one, I say, could have imagined more perfect happiness. O! what a common this was, wide, far-spreading, such as increasing population, and what they call "civilization," is fast taking away from us. A beautiful tangled garden of furze and bracken, with soft springing turf, that later in the year was covered with purple heath, and where

many a flower, rare to Aggie's eyes, grew already. When the hot days of July came, it was her favourite walk, to gather the little upright green blossom of the "Lady's Tresses," with the tiny blossoms winding round and round the straight little stiff stem, and giving out such a strong sweet scent; once, on this common, they had found the rare Bee-orchis, and one or two roots of the Fly-orchis, and all over the gorse and fern a perfect tangle of Clover-dodder, a tiny waxy pink flower that, though so slight, has sometimes destroyed whole acres of clover by overgrowing it. Here it had no power against the prickly, strong gorse, and only made a fairy web all over it. Then, as the common stretched away to the sea, and the ground became more and more chalky, on the very roughest, wildest places, where one would think nothing could grow, the bright blue blossoms of the Viper's Buglos, with deep crimson stamens, would peep out and seem to tell them, there was not a bit of this earth, rough and wild as it might be, that God did not care for and cover with beauty. Yellow and white Bedstraw grew in great patches, with blue Speedwells between, and the little blue and pink Milk-wort sprung up wherever there was a bare place among the short grass. I never could tell you half the glories of that common, or what the children hunted for, and found on it, day after day, as the summer passed quickly by.

But there was one other place in the neighbourhood, that proved almost, if not quite, as great an attraction to the children as the common, and that was the park that surrounded the old ruined Manor House of Halnaker. Too ruined to be much more than standing walls, they yet made out a story for themselves of every corner, and called each by their names. Here was the kitchen and dairy, here the nursery and play-room, and the larger spaces, covered now only by rank grass and weeds and open to the sky above, were dignified by the names of banqueting hall and reception rooms. A lover of the beautiful would not have found the old house to his taste, nor would an antiquarian have pored over it for hours; it was simply a country seat gone to ruins, a good, large, plain house, that left no towers or buttresses, or rugged picturesque lines, but to the children it was everything, and, as they said, "as good as their very own." No one came to disturb their possession, only sometimes the head of a quiet cow would peep over some fallen wall, when she and her companions were grazing in the old park, that not so long ago was filled with graceful

deer, the last mementos of the good old family that had died out, and were almost forgotten, principally remembered by the monuments in the old church, that told of bygone joys and sorrows, and how everything that is earthly passes away. The great strong trees were the only things that seemed to brave Time there; their noble trunks rose majestically and their arms spread wide to the winds of heaven, as each year clothed them with green and stripped them again, with that perfect order in all things, that is heaven's law. A long avenue of Spanish chestnuts led to the old house, and fun enough the little cousins promised Agatha, if only she would wait and stay till the chestnuts were ripe, and learn to roast them at the nursery fire. Little Robert, or Robin, as he was generally called, could not often go on the children's expeditions with them, and it so happened that the old house had always been thought too far for him; but Agatha begged he might go too, one fine day, and promising to make him her special charge, Caroline the nurse, also being of the party, it was allowed. On his way his curiosity was great, and he asked many questions, which looked more like anxiety than pleasure. At last it came out; when they were getting near, he looked up quickly into Agatha's face, and tightening his grasp on her hand, made a sign that she should stoop over his little carriage, and whispering low, that the others should not hear and laugh, said, "Oh, Aggie, Aggie, I'm so frightened; will the *bruins* come out, do you think?" For a moment Agatha did not understand, and then it suddenly flashed on her, poor little Robin's head was running on the stories of bruins or bears he had been told, and was confusing them with the ruins he heard so much about now! He was soon comforted, you may be sure, and a happy morning followed for them all. On the way home there was a long bit of road with a very high wall on one side, before you got into the village again, and the children laughed to see Agatha jump when a great fat pheasant came whirring over, as they constantly did; but she soon became accustomed to these pleasant surprises, and before she had been in Ashgrove long, knew most of the birds they commonly saw by name, learning even more than the little cousins, who had been accustomed to them all their lives.

But Agatha's pleasures were not all beyond the garden. No, some of the very greatest were in it and just close round it. For instance, what was more delicious than fetching her little basket and looking for

the eggs every morning, carrying them into Aunt's store-room, where they were dated, and those of the bantam that had been given to Agatha marked with a great A? Then there were the calves to be petted, who looked so wistfully out of their big brown eyes, and the cows to be milked every evening, when Agatha followed old Margery the dairy woman with her little cup, that they all declared was doing her so much good already. And on churning days, she patted up her own little pats, with a good deal of Margery's help certainly, and actually Aunt sent them to London with plenty of other good country things. The hay-loft too, was a great attraction, where the children would sit, sometimes playing quietly in the half darkness, sometimes nursing their kittens up there, but none of them still for long, except Agatha, who loved to be up there alone, and look out of the open door to the sunny fields that lay below, and drink in the sweet country air and sounds. Shall I tell you what Agatha saw, as she lay in a waking dream, sinking down into the perfumed hay, scarcely thinking, only so quietly alive to all that went on around her? First of all she almost unconsciously watched the soft wind blowing the ends of hay about her, then her eye followed them to the floor and noticed the grains of corn and seeds lying there before her, and oh, a tiny, tiny mouse had crept out without seeing her, and was nibbling and nibbling, running here and running there, with his bright round eyes gleaming like black beads. Agatha was very careful not to stir, but in spite of that, Mr. Mousey's sharp eyes soon found her out, and away he scampered back to his hole, and still as she might be, never ventured back while she was there. Then her gaze wandered away over the paddock, round which the stable and other outbuildings lay, to where the back of the old red brick rectory shut out further view in front of her. To the left rose the tower of the old grey church, only as far off as the garden stretched, which was separated from the churchyard by a boundary wall; and between Agatha and the old tower rose the ruins of the Benedictine monastery that had once joined the church. Proudly as they had once risen in the air, the hand of time had touched them and laid them low, leaving only sufficient to trace what once had been there, and leave a history of the past. Agatha's eyes rested lovingly on the church, and before long she slipped from her high seat and crept quietly in; she knew it would be open, and often and often the sunbeams, falling in through many an ancient window, fell on the

quiet form of the child who loved to be there. It was so different from the London church she had known all her life, and young though she was, a feeling of awe and reverence pervaded it which she herself was hardly conscious of; she only knew she was very still and happy there, and it was a holy place where no disturbing sound might enter, and where the boys' loud voices were hushed, for they too felt its influence. There was always a solemn shadow in it over all, that made the aisles fade away into an uncertain distance, and gave a more mysterious look still to the nun's walk, that went so high up all round the church, where Agatha loved to dream of veiled figures gliding backwards and forwards, coming and going noiselessly as they must have done many, many years ago. But Agatha did not stop long this morning; a short time ago she had been missed for so long, that it raised considerable anxiety on her account, and at last she was found in the church, where she had been sitting while her aunt was softly playing the organ; soothed by the sweet sounds and wearied with a long morning's walk, she had fallen asleep, and was woken by the jarring of the old door as it was being shut and locked. This was a never-failing source of amusement to the boys, and she did not want to be laughed at again, so she crept out into the sunlight after a few minutes, and walking by the old lime at the door, down the path that led to the rectory garden, was soon among her cousins again.

Something very exciting was going on, for they were all gathered in a group round the gardener, talking very earnestly to him, and Agatha heard him say, as she came up, "Well, Miss Emma, if your papa does not mind, I'll see what I can do for you," and then she found they were all chattering at once about the delightful swing they had in the old chestnut tree last year, and they wanted another just like it now. They soon had their wish, and before long, one after the other went fearlessly up into the green boughs, backwards and forwards till it made one giddy to look at them. Agatha was rather timid at first, but gathering courage from her cousins, and more than all fearing to provoke a laugh at her town ways, she was soon as bold as any among them.

But all this time where is my May-day story? I had almost forgotten I had promised *that* at the beginning; and who knows I should not have forgotten it altogether, and begun telling you of the black-berry and nutting expeditions if I had not thought of the boys laugh-

ing, and remembered how it affected Agatha's first May-day in the country, and helped to make everything turn out so differently from what she had expected, though I will not say less happily in the end? But you shall judge for yourselves.

Well, as the day approached you may fancy how the children's excitement increased, and how much slower the time seemed to go than it had ever done before. Agatha was not a whit behind her cousins in looking forward to the great event, and often pictured to herself how the maypole would look, all garlanded and bright with flowers and streaming ribbons, while the children danced and played around it; and who would be the queen? How Aggie herself would like to be; but no! that was out of the question, they would never choose her whom they knew so little of; it would be some village child, who was a general favourite. But oh! how Aggie would like to be such a one!

For days the boys had made long excursions for wild flowers, and they were kept carefully in pans in the dairy, to be fresh for the 1st. Already some few boughs of early May had been found, and primroses, cowslips, blue-bells, marsh-marigolds, anemones, and many other flowers, more than they wanted generally of each. Besides the grand maypole of the day, that rose so high in the air, each child carried a smaller one of its own making; and the morning of the 1st found the little people of the rectory busy with theirs.

All was not quite what it ought to be among them. Oh, dear! how sad it is to think how *one* sharp word will lead to an answer, and another and another, till two people at least, and often more, are made angry and unhappy, just because of that one little word, that ought never to have been spoken. Edward and Arthur were hot and cross, after a long search for Fritillaries, which they had not found, and Emma, instead of soothing them with quiet words, was sharp too, and let herself be provoked into saying more than she meant. Aggie was grieved to hear quarrelling among the brothers and sisters, and more hurt than all to see how poor little Robin was forgotten and neglected. They were all in a summer-house in the garden, and seeing nurse with him in the distance ran to meet him, and wheeled him up to the rest, where he might watch them, and play with the flowers. He was very quiet to-day, and poorly, and, as Agatha thought, entitled to more kindness and consideration than was shown him; for the others,

either a little too cross to say much to him, or too much occupied with their own garlands, left him to himself, or told him not to disturb their flowers.

"Oh, Aggie, cowslips!" said the little fellow, pointing to a golden heap that lay on one of the seats. "Oh, Aggie, my ball, my ball!"

Agatha had indeed promised him a ball not long ago; but she could not make it now, her garland was not nearly ready, and it promised to be the prettiest of all. Robin must wait; he should share her garland with her, she would let him carry it anywhere he liked, only *not* the ball this morning.

"But oh, Aggie, I want it so. I don't want a garland. Oh, make my ball, *do, do!*"

"Do be quiet, Robin!" said Sybil; "don't you see Agatha is busy?"

"And if you tease so, I shall call Nurse," added Emma, crossly.

Poor little Robin! he did not say a word, but the tears gathered in his blue eyes, and his eager face clouded over sadly. Agatha could not stand that; she was down at his side directly, her momentary selfishness gone, and a whole heap of cowslips lying in Robin's lap, while he helped her to pick the stalks off short, and smiles lit up again the patient little white face, while Aggie whispered to him, and made him laugh gaily, and forget his disappointment. The others did not notice for some time, till one of the boys called out sharply, "Why, where are all the cowslips gone? There were so many, and now I can only find these. I *must* have some more to finish this wreath!"

Agatha looked up with red cheeks, and answered she had taken them for Robin's ball.

"Robin's ball, indeed!" said Arthur, scornfully, "you were not in such a hurry to make Robin's ball just now, and I think you might have asked if the cowslips were wanted first."

"I am very sorry, Arthur, I did not know you wanted them, and poor Robin *does* want his ball so."

"You might have thought of that before; you used plenty for your own garland first before you began his ball, and its most provoking of you, and I believe you have done it on purpose to spite me, because you want yours to be best."

Poor Agatha! this was too much for her patience, and with her cheeks flaming now, she rose from where she had been kneeling on the ground, and cried out, "You are very unjust, Arthur, to dare to say

such a thing of me, and very unkind to Robin, too; and I think you are very cross to him, all of you, and ought to know better."

Her voice rose higher than she knew in her excitement, and her uncle, passing by, caught the sound, and looking in saw her standing with-



flashing eyes and angry face in the midst of the other children, her garland on the ground where she had been kneeling, and the rest staring at her without a word, Robin scared and silent in his little chair.

"Agatha! Agatha!" sounded a warning voice. "Agatha! Agatha! quarrelling over your flowers! for shame, children, I thought you had learnt to give up to one another, and bear with one another. I am sorry to hear this."

As her uncle spoke his eye fell on Agatha, and she felt she deserved the reproof that was given to them all; but yet she knew Arthur had been unjust and unkind, and with a feeling half-repentant and half-indignant she rushed away, and disappeared through the side-gate, sped away across the paddock to the hay-loft, where she felt she should be safe and alone. Here she sobbed as if her heart would break, and wished she were again at home, where her mother's gentle voice soothed every outbreak that might arise among the children. She went over and over the scene again in her own mind, till she felt more and more convinced she was very much to be pitied, her uncle was very unkind and unjust to say "Agatha, Agatha" so sternly, and class her with the quarrellers. Arthur was very unkind, and the others too, for they took his part, and she saw them smile to each other as she took her hasty flight.

And this was May-day! Poor, poor Agatha, you have yet to learn how many a rainbow that glitters as if it were so near, you could put out your hand and touch it, is yet a long way off, and only to be reached through storms and tears! Here was she sobbing bitterly, and, worse than all, angry and hurt in her heart, letting it get hard and cold, with the same sun shining that shone an hour ago, the same birds singing, the same world all round, only, oh, how different to her! The time passed on, and she heard the clock strike two. Their early dinner was over before this sad scene with the garlands, and it was nearly time to start; she knew the children would be coming to look for her soon, but she would not go, her eyes were swollen with crying, her cheeks still burning, and she felt she had no heart for it now. So she still crouched down in her quiet corner, till she felt more tranquil. Presently, though she was not looking up, but idly letting her eyes wander about without thinking of what they saw, she became aware somebody was standing in the loft with her, for a shadow came between her and the open door. It was old William, the gardener.

"Why, little miss," said the kind old man, who was one of Agatha's especial friends, "why, little miss, what's the matter? They're all waiting for you down there," jerking his hand towards the house. "I

heard them wondering where you were just now. Jump up and run down to them; they'll be starting before long, and such a maypole as our children have you'll never have seen in all London town!"

The kind voice brought the tears back into Agatha's eyes in spite of her resolutions to cry no more, and her voice shook a little as she said, "I am not going, William, I don't want to go now." But even as she said it a keen sense of disappointment rushed over her at the recollection of the many day-dreams she had woven out of the thoughts of to-day, and she could not help a sob, and another, and another.

Old William had had children enough of his own, and grandchildren, too, to understand pretty well how matters stood, besides being a keen enough observer to know something of the characters of Agatha's cousins, and the little visitor who had first won his heart by her quiet ways, and innocent joy in those things that the best of all could show her and make her appreciate.

"I think I know what's the matter, my dear," he said, "and if you'll just listen to an old man, who has lived long enough to learn something, though every day shows him how little, you will just jump up from that hay, and run off to the rest of the little folks down there, and forget what has passed. Moping never did anybody any good, but rather harm, and the longer you put it off the harder it will be to go down to them again. Forgive and forget, child; you must practise that all your life, and the sooner you learn how to do it the better, it takes two to make a quarrel, but one can forgive, and you be the one to begin." Don't stop to think who was the worst, just clear yourself by forgiving and getting forgiven, and leave the rest to right itself, as it always does when the proper time comes."

William's homely speech was just what Agatha wanted, she always decided quickly, and this was what her own conscience was beginning to tell her; so she dried her eyes, and jumped up quite briskly, saying, as she put her little hand into old William's, "I will go down, William, I have been very cross; but I *will* try to be better. You have made me all right again," and with a grateful little squeeze of the rough hand, she moved slowly off, not so brisk now as she jumped up, for she rather dreaded the meeting with her cousins, and wondered what they would say to her. She wished it was over, or that Mother were there to help her; but no! it was right to tell them she had been wrong, and was sorry for it, and she must do it, so on she went

till she stood in the front of the house, where they were all assembled. It was a great trial for poor, shy Agatha to go up to the busy talking throng, who did not notice her at first, and to make her way up to Arthur, who stood near her uncle. But she would not put off the thing she had determined to do, though she was sorely tempted, but walked straight up to him, and said in a voice that tried to be brave, though it would quaver, "Arthur, I was very cross just now, and I am very sorry." What a relief it was when it was over!

"Oh, never mind, Aggie; I dare say I was cross too. Get your garland quick; I finished it for you when I had done mine."

"Oh, Arthur, how kind!"

"Well, don't lose time and bother; it's in the summer-house."

And the matter was dismissed in this summary manner; and though Arthur might have been more gracious, and certainly had been very much in the wrong, Agatha did not stop to think of that, but was only too glad to feel the weight off her mind, and to think her garland was finished; and the sun shone again, all the brighter for the storm.

The cowslips strewn on the summer-house floor reminded her again of poor little Robin, and how she had forgotten his ball, and seizing her garland, she ran off to look for him, and wish him good-bye, for he might not go with them.

He was up in the large nursery that overlooked the garden, playing rather disconsolately by himself, and gave a cry of joy when he saw Agatha and her flowers at the door.

"Aggie's not gone! she's not gone!" he said, with a bright look on his pale face; "she's come to play with Robin, that they always leave alone!"

Oh, Agatha, what will you do now? This is the day you have looked forward to more than any other; the children are waiting for you, your garland is in your hand, your white sun-bonnet shading a most eager face, where present pleasure and joyful expectation have chased away the clouds that shadowed it just now! The other children have left Robin with Nurse, who always amuses him so well, and they will soon be back; but how can you bear to bring a shade over the white face that turns to you in such trust. No, you cannot; and after only a moment's hesitation, you say, gaily, "Yes! Aggie will stay and play with Robin; but he must wait a moment;" and then she

ran away and found Emma, and told her she would rather not go, and they should not wait for her.

"What nonsense!" said Emma, "you *must* come, we have waited ten minutes for you already, and all the fun will begin if you are not quick. It's very unkind of you to say you won't come; I am sure Arthur did not mean to be cross, and you will spoil all our pleasure if you are sulky still."

How hard it was not to make an angry answer, but one glance at the window, where Robin stood drumming with impatient little hands, checked the angry feeling in Agatha's heart, and she answered gently, "I am not sulky, and I am very sorry I was cross; and indeed, and indeed, Emma, I only want to stay at home because I have promised poor Robin I will, and I won't break my word to him," and with that she broke away, and running quickly out of sight stopped when she came to the old staircase, and watched them off from the landing window where they did not see her. She could tell that they were talking eagerly together, and Emma seemed to be explaining to the others. It was hard for her to fancy they were perhaps laughing at her, and certainly not giving her credit for the real reason that kept her at home, but no doubt thought her cross and sulky, just the very thing she had struggled against and overcome. How bitter a thing it is to be misunderstood! but there are some bitter things that leave a great peace and calm behind them, when they are met in a gentle spirit, that thinks of something beside itself, and Agatha, wiping her eyes, and determining to forget herself, and make Robin happy, unconscious of what she was doing, made herself very happy too.

I know you would think it a very nice end to my story if, as a reward for her unselfishness, Agatha went to the maypole after all in some unexpected way, and people saw how good she had been, and her uncle and aunt praised her for it. But such things rarely happen out of story books, and the best reward of a gentle deed is *felt* but not *seen*.


I rather think the cousins always mistook Agatha, and thought she made Robin an excuse, and stayed at home because she was still angry from the morning; and her uncle and aunt heard very little about it, they did not know she was not with the rest of the children, having been out themselves nearly all day, called away unexpectedly.

So the hours passed, and evening and bed-time came at last, and the

great day was over, and Aggie had never seen the maypole after all! But when she lay down in bed that night no anger lingered in her heart; true there was a little shade of disappointment, but a greater feeling of peace, just such as our Heavenly Father sends when He sees that love has been there before. And Robin's good-night kiss lingered long in her memory.

L. K.

LIFE IN THE DESERT.

"UNT EMMA," said Charlie, on the very first day that his aunt seemed less busy than usual, "you promised, you know, to give me an account of your life in the desert. I am longing to hear it, for it must have been quite like gipsying! Real gipsying, no make-believe! How pleasant it must have been! Won't you tell me exactly all about it; every little thing, so that I can see exactly how you managed? Perhaps, when I get strong, and grow up, I may be able to travel too. I should like to go all round the world, and see how people do things in different countries! I wonder, though, if I should be puzzled to know which was the best place to live in! Do you think I should, Aunt Emma?"

"I think not," said his aunt, "I am far from having seen all the world, certainly; but I have been in a great many parts of it, and though I enjoyed seeing the beautiful scenery, and strange customs, and fine works of art, I never ceased to think our own dear England the happiest and best of countries, and my greatest pleasure was the returning to it again, with, however, a new store of pictures for my mind to look back upon."

"And to describe to me, Auntie," said Charlie; "I dare say you are right," he continued, "home is always home, and best of all; though one country may have more beautiful flowers, and more delicious fruits, or grander mountains and forests, or finer palaces and pictures, yet still we like our own country best—is not that a good thing? And no doubt the people of those other countries feel just the same for their own. So now that we have settled that point, please Auntie, let me hear what you did with all those stores you were telling me about, and how you set forth on your journey."

"I need not," said Aunt Emma, "describe the camels to you, for

you have seen them in the Zoological Gardens, and know the way they kneel down to receive their burdens, and the jerk they give you as they rise up again, and the stately pace at which they walk; but the little ride you had would not give you an idea of how fatiguing the motion is until you get accustomed to it; the body sways to and fro with each long step, and for the first few hours it often gives a feeling of faintness, and you get terribly cramped and wearied from sitting so many hours; but after a few days' riding, you become quite used to your new steed, and can read, and even write as you go along.

"A saddle-cloth, and a queer wooden saddle with a high crutch before and behind are first placed upon the animal's back; then saddle-bags made of a long piece of striped carpet, with the ends turned up to form the bags, and the centre plain piece long enough to go across the saddle, and leave a bag hanging down at each side decorated with gay fringes more than a quarter of a yard deep! These bags held the things we more immediately required, as they could be easily got at, and every night they were brought into our tents; only on rare occasions did we open any of our boxes. These saddle-bags being full, stuck out on each side of the camel, and when a mattress and a cushion or two were placed upon them, and covered by a Persian carpet, formed a nice broad seat, to which, when the camels knelt, we were helped to mount, and then with our feet in two stirrups tied to the pommel of the saddle in front, and forming a sort of footstool, and with the rope halter in one hand, and a koorbatch or whip of rhinoceros hide in the other, we were ready for the march. As to our dress, we ladies wore long grey skirts over our usual attire, so that we could remove them at pleasure, if we wished to walk; and either felt hats or quilted hoods like sun-bonnets; and moreover we each had always at hand a large cloak or burnous made of camel's hair dyed black, and bound with red, with a large hood to it, with long red tassels—this garment was invaluable, it was so thick it would turn rain or keep out sun, so that whether the day were cold or hot it was sure to be wanted; we spread it on the ground when we stopped at mid-day to rest, and put it over our beds at night if we were more than usually chilly. On the crutch behind us we used to hang a bag containing books, writing, and sketching materials, &c. The camels we rode were better and more active than those devoted to the baggage,

which were heavier and slower animals—mine, in particular, was a very handsome young one, with beautiful, thick, curly hair on his head, neck, and body, and fine, dark eyes, and long lashes; he was, however, rather skittish, and used to start and shy at any strange object.

"The master of each camel generally walked near to it, though sometimes he took a ride upon one of those which carried the servants; it was quite pretty to see the affection between the beast and his master, they would kiss each other most affectionately. At our halting-places I used to gather such shrubs as I saw they liked to browse upon to feed mine, and we soon became well acquainted.

"I forgot to mention that besides our own goods each of us carried some weapon belonging to the Arabs slung on behind the saddle, such as pistols, a spare staff, an old sabre, or, as in my case, a long-barrelled musket in an ancient leather case, which looked like the mummy of a piece of fire-arms! The dragoman took charge of our luncheon and a leathern water bottle called a 'zemzemeeh,' out of which we were often very glad to get a drink.

"The baggage camels were generally tied to each other in a long string, the halter of one being fastened to the pack-saddle of the one before him; in this way they were easier to drive as they could not stray about to eat the scanty herbage and shrubs, but when we came to mountains or water-courses they were separated, and each Arab would take charge of his own.

"What gave us most trouble was the care of certain boxes called canteens in which the crockery and breakable articles such as bottles, glasses, &c., were very commodiously stowed away—great was the dismay when an animal, bearing a pair of these precious boxes, took it into his head to start off at a trot before he had been secured to his neighbour, or, worse still, to fall down. Then the noise and shouting and scrambling amongst the attendants was indescribable! However, we got on with wondrously few breakages, and though I was once pitched off head foremost, I was only severely shaken and fortunately had no broken bones."

"Oh! Auntie," said Charlie, "how could you fall off! you are such a good horsewoman!"

"Riding a horse and riding a camel are two very different matters, Charlie! However I did not disgrace myself, for the camel fell, and

in doing so threw me over his head. Their soft feet are admirably adapted for walking in the sand, but when they come to a slippery descent they are not so sure-footed; I saw the servants have one or two severe tumbles, in particular the cook, a burly, good-humoured Nubian, who, dressed in blue, with a red and yellow kefish (a handkerchief with long fringes) on his head, and a coat of many colours, reminding one of that of Joseph, over his shoulders, used to sit in state among his hen-coops, with pots and pans and kitchen utensils hanging round about him, and a sheep slung across the camel's neck, and often employed as he went along in plucking a turkey, or preparing a pair of fowls or pigeons for the dinner.

"I told you that we used to stop and rest at mid-day; this gave time for the servants and baggage to get ahead of us and to reach the camping ground for the night and have the tents pitched and everything arranged by the time we arrived.

"After an eight or ten, and sometimes *twelve* hours' march, it was a welcome sight to behold our little encampment. The three tents formed a triangle, our two in line, that for the servants in front; in the latter all the boxes not wanted were safely stowed, while the canteens were placed outside to form a square, within which was the portable fire-place. This was neither more nor less than a platform of broad pieces of thin iron plaited together and standing on four legs; upon this charcoal was kindled, and there was room for four saucepans in a row. Yet, with only this primitive kitchen, quite sumptuous entertainments used to be furnished, not merely such a dinner as a hungry traveller would be glad to get, but one that would be considered quite nice and sufficient in an ordinary English home. We had *always* soup, two or three dishes of meat, a pudding, dessert, and a cup of tea or coffee to wind up with; having partaken of which, and written our journals, we very gladly retired to rest, knowing that we should have to be stirring very early on the morrow.

"At a little distance from us the Arabs, having tethered the camels, formed a sort of screen of the saddles and some of the baggage, and lighted a large fire, used to prepare their evening meal, grinding their corn in a sort of handmill like the ancient Irish quern, formed of two round flat stones, one on the top of the other, with a handle in the upper one and a hole for the meal to pass through. This work is performed by the women when there are any with them. The

Bible, you remember, speaks of 'two women grinding at the mill.' Two or three of the Arabs usually watch over the camp while the rest are sleeping.

"Next morning, before we think the night is half over, the voice of the dragoman is heard calling to us to get up. We look at our watches and perceive that it is about half-past five o'clock, or perhaps six, if we have not very far to go; the length of our day's march is determined by the Arabs, who know where we shall find water. We make haste to dress, and are hardly ready when Vincenzo begins to take down the tents. While they are being packed up, and the first camels being loaded, we take our breakfast in the open air, and I can tell you that on a cold wintry morning with frost on the ground that is not a pleasant performance.

"The tea has of course no milk in it unless we have been lucky enough to fall in with a flock of goats, which does not often happen—never unless we are near the tents of some wandering tribe—still, we are glad to have something warm to drink before starting. There is a great growling of camels, who object to being laden, and a good deal of confusion and squabbling among the Arabs; but at last all is arranged, and we get off on our march again, and the sight of a beautiful sunrise soon cheers us; and, perhaps, discontented mortals that we are, by ten o'clock we shall be complaining as much of the heat as we before did of the cold."

"But, Aunt Emma," said Charlie, "please tell me what the desert is like,—is it nothing but a dreary, sandy waste?"

"No Charlie, that is a very common idea, and one that I had myself before I went there—for the first few days certainly, between Cairo and Suez, there is not much to see, you traverse for the most part a glaring white chalky plain, but even that is interesting, for you find many fossils, not only shells, but large pieces of trees quite turned into flint, the grain of the wood being, however, quite perceptible. These are portions of the petrified forest, which I was very sorry not to visit as it was not far out of our way; but my fellow-travellers did not care about seeing it, so I could not help myself. I was told that numbers of trees, snapped off and lying half buried in the sand, are there to be seen, with a great many fragments also; so that, as one traveller says, the place looks like a great timber yard, only that all is stone! Some of the trees are mere hollow trunks, others are palm trees, perfectly

straight, while in some cases even the roots are entire. When we encamped for the night on the third day after leaving Cairo we were in sight of the Red Sea, with here and there a sail in the distance. On our right was a chain of craggy mountains, and opposite to us on the other side of the sea another chain was more faintly visible. The next morning we reached Suez, and as there is nothing remarkable in the town, a very short inspection satisfied us, and sending our camels round the head of the Gulf to meet us at the other side, we ourselves crossed the Red Sea in a boat.

"This was very pleasant; for the air was mild, the water calm and blue, and the mountains all around very beautiful; and we thought of the wonderful crossing of the Israelites and the destruction of presumptuous Pharaoh, and of the joyful song which Moses and the people sang when they found themselves delivered from their enemies and safe on the opposite shore. We do not know exactly where they crossed, and there are many different opinions about it; but even the Arabs have preserved a recollection of the wonderful event, as they call the mountains near Suez *Djebel Atúka*, 'mountain of the chariots,' and a fountain near to which we, as is usual, encamped, is called *Ain Moosa*, 'the Fountain of Moses.'

"The fountain bubbles up in a muddy green tank in a garden, through which the water is conducted by little canals; the garden is like all those I saw in Egypt, laid out in square beds, banked up on every side, so that at certain times of the year they can be inundated. Cypress, tamarisk, and acacia trees of various kinds grow there, as well as figs, lemons, and other fruits. But I know what would have delighted you, Charlie, the most, would have been to gather some of the millions of shells that abound upon the shore of the Red Sea!

"Not only on this first day, but on several other occasions, when pursuing our journey, after crossing mountains we came down upon the sea again, and the difficulty was only to know which to pick up and which to leave behind, where all were so beautiful. We also found pieces of coral, sponge, and brainstone; but you have seen them often in my cabinet, and, indeed, have some of them yourself; and if you want to hear any more of Auntie's travels, it must be at some other time, for I cannot stay any longer with you just at present."

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew. Y DEAR TOBY,

The next entry in my old diary on the subject of fishing is dated May 29th. "*Caught a trout weighing two pounds ten ounces, with a minnow; and another, one pound six ounces; and three brace more, all over three-quarters of a pound.*" Yes, Toby, that was an afternoon, indeed. It was in one of the Hampshire chalk streams. I was at school; and this happened on one half-holiday. The may-fly was out early that year. It generally did not appear till June; but on the afternoon in question it was, as we used to say, "well on the water." The day was thoroughly wet, a sort of drizzle had been going on ever since the morning, and it was almost in despair of getting any comfortable fly-fishing that I fortified myself with a little bait-can of minnows, and, with some may-flies in my hat, went down to the river. Now, Toby, I must tell you that the river I was "whipping" was a very different sort of stream to those in the north of England. Instead of a rocky bed, and a rapid descent from the head of the stream among hills, here was a bottom of chalk and flints, very deep pools, water-meadows intersected with ditches, long waving water-weeds swaying in the current, osier beds, banks of tall reeds, and water as clear as crystal. The water came sweeping along in curling eddies, its surface as smooth as a looking-glass; and, even on the shallows, was much less broken than is usual in the northern or western streams. There was no "tumbling," except at the weirs or hatches, which let water into the ditches through the meadows.

When you have read this account of the southern stream, you will no doubt guess that it had to be fished in a rather different manner from the tumbling rocky streams in the north; and such was the case. Toby, to fish such streams with effect, you must know how to *dry and float* your fly. This is rather difficult; so do not be disappointed if you whip off a lot of flies in your first attempt. To *dry* your fly, Toby, you must flick it, as if you were smacking a whip behind you, to shake out the water. Now, unless you are very careful, this flicking

will just leave you minus your fly. You must learn to flick it just enough, and no more. Do you remember that in my last letter I told you how to know where your line is in the air when throwing your fly?

Well, now, you must know more. Not only must you know where your line is, but where the end of your line is, and the fly upon it. Do not imagine that eventually, when you have once learnt the knack, it will be necessary, every time you throw your fly, to consider the exact course your line and fly will take. When you are master of the trick you will not have to think, but will know, by a sort of instinct, where they are. But, in the meantime, you must be content to learn the principle from the beginning. You are now learning to throw in the very *finest* possible fashion. Your fly is dried by the smack in the air; you want to make it alight gently on the water. Throw, say the books, so that your fly touches the water before any part of your line. Toby, on this point your uncle ventures to disagree with the books. Don't attempt to make your fly alight before the line; first, because it is next door to impossible; and secondly, because, even supposing that you did succeed, it would not fall very lightly; and, if it did fall first, it would be useless for such fishing as this we are talking of, for it would, of necessity, go under the water at once. What you have to do is to make it alight gently on the surface, and stay there; for your fly must float. That is why you have dried it. Now, Toby, take your rod in your hand, and throw your line in front of you *into the air*; do not let it touch anything: throw *over* that dandelion, not *at* it. You will see that the impetus you have given your fly will be checked by the fact of your line having reached its full extent; it may not be quite expended; there may be enough left to give the line a recoil back. Well, the secret of light throwing is to see the exact moment when the force is expended, and then to lower the point of your rod a tiny bit. You will find that your fly and most of the lash will drop simultaneously on the water, as light as a feather. Your fly is dry, and will sail down the surface of the stream, with its wings upright, like the sails of a tiny felucca, on a bay in a dead calm. Have I made it clear to you, Toby, that to make your fly alight gently you must dry your fly, and know exactly how much force is left from the impetus of throwing the line out, and that, counteracting any surplus by lowering your rod, you must let all the

light lash at the end of your line, and flies, alight simultaneously on the water.

There are two other ways, Toby, of throwing lightly, both of which we used to practise; but they are tricks, though, nevertheless, useful ones. If you can throw across the stream, or on to a bank of reeds in the middle, throw your point fly on to them, and then very gently pull him on to the water. It will then seem as if he had rolled off a leaf of the weeds by accident. Sometimes this is the only way of getting a big fish which is feeding close under a bank. The other way is to dry your fly, and then bang the heavy part of your line on the top of the water. This exhausts the force I told you you had to get rid of before your flies touched the water, and your lash then drops lightly enough. This is a very useful trick to know: if you have to throw in the teeth of the wind, you will find that it is a good plan to have about two or three feet of *twisted* gut before the final fine lash. The weight of this makes it easy to throw against the wind, and takes the strain off the end fly. In throwing, as I said, bang this part of your line on the water, short of the fish you are throwing for. And this, Toby, brings me to another peculiarity in the chalk stream fishing. You throw for your fish more particularly than in the tumbling streams. The water is clear; you see the currents, and the shape of the bed, and where a drain-pipe comes in, and the eddy between the banks of weeds. The surface of the stream is more open; the fish are bigger and fewer in number; they do not wait about the skirts of a current, and dash in and out for their food. They are more lazy. They lie with their noses up stream, in one spot, and if a fly comes sailing down, with one paddle of their fins they rise to the top, give a gentle suck, and go down to their old position. It is peculiar too by the southern chalk streams to hear, on a bright day in June, the fish actually *smack their lips* as they suck in a fat may-fly. Very often it is much more easy to hear this smack than to see any disturbance of the surface of the stream caused by their rising. Another peculiarity the fish "down south" seemed to have was, that they found time to discover that the may-fly they had got hold of was made of feathers, and not of flesh and gauzy wings, while it was in their mouths, and managed to blow it out before the hook could be fixed in their jaws.

From what I have told you, Toby, you will see that I found the south country fishing rather difficult, and so it was not with any great

hopes that I set out on the afternoon referred to in my diary. Now, since the water was so clear, and the fish so big, it was the custom to watch the big fish in their ascent up the stream all through the season. The favourite halting places were all well known, and the "monsters of the deep" recognised on their arrival half a mile higher up the stream. Well, Toby, there was one fish which all the fishermen had seen, and we all knew where he regularly fed. The popular idea fixed his weight at between three and four pounds. He was to be seen regularly, with his nose at the mouth of a water-pipe, which was laid under a path leading past a mill; in fact, this pipe connected the mill-pond with the stream below the wheel. The mouth of the pipe was in the side of the bricks which lined the mill-head where the water fell over the wheel. Every fisherman about had been after him. I had watched them, this day, throwing a fly over his head; and, on the next, they would come armed with live minnows or worms, and drop them gently into the current where he was feeding. Yes, Toby, but this is just how they failed to catch him. They dropped their minnows into the torrent gushing from the pipe, but immediately the force of the current swept it into the stream, before it had had time to sink to the level of the whale's nose. Some put a lot of lead'on, but that only frightened the fish; and, one and all, he refused their allurements. Happily for my basket, on the afternoon in question, I had watched them and detected their mistake. Now my turn had come. Cautiously I tied on a rather large plain hook, making the knot very secure; delicately I inserted it in the upper lip of one of my brightest silvery minnows, and very carefully I lowered it into the water. Not into the current of the pipe; no, indeed, but close to the wall, just on *one side* of the gush.

Standing on the upper side of the pipe, I let my minnow sink to the bottom in the water, immediately below the pipe, and then drew him gently towards me. The stream, as soon as it touched my minnow, did, indeed, carry it away as rapidly as my fellow anglers' baits had gone before, but this time it carried it, not a foot and a half above the fish's head, but absolutely straight into his jaws. I felt a tug, I struck, and then found I had to run: up and down, up and down he led me, now bolting to the bottom and burying his nose in the weeds, to my great dismay, and now jumping straight out of the water. Vague visions, now of salmon which had been caught at the mouth of this

stream on the south coast, but which had never really got up so high ; now of the mysterious, and never-to-be-seen monster trouts, whose tradition lingered about the waters of the Itchen, passed before my excited imagination, and prevented my seeing for the moment the more substantial apparitions which gaped with delight on each side of me. On the opposite bank a mill lad, enjoying the fun with all his mouth and teeth, and by my side two diminutive anglers, my school-fellows, with hats—"tiles" too big for them—on their heads, drenched to the skin by the rain, and holding each his gudgeon rod in one hand, while with the other he grasped the victims of his craft—about three small gudgeon. "Shall I land him for you?" brought me to my senses. "Yes," I exclaimed, "there is the net lying on the path." A few more desperate efforts and Leviathan gave way, my line slackened, and he came to the top and turned on his side. On the sight of the landing net he made a last attempt to flee, but was overpowered, and with delight I pulled the monster on the bank. Once more I put the minnow in at a weir close by, and this time a splendid fish of one pound six ounces took him, and, after a game struggle, succumbed. I did no more with the minnow. It was not a rough enough day to spin, and so I changed the hook for a may-fly, and went to new ground. Now, Toby, I was rather lucky in my "baskets;" I mean, I managed to kill more fish than many of my brother anglers, though I was but among the youngest, and for this simple reason, as I believe, viz., that I watched the fish more. Amongst other injudicious practices, as far as health was concerned, which in my youth I was addicted to, was that of getting up a party of, say half-a-dozen other boys, and then going "jumping in water-meads." This consisted in strolling through the meadows and jumping all the ditches. As we all meant to, at any rate, run the risk of getting a ducking, so long as one of the party was willing to go at any given ditch, the rest were bound to follow. Well, on these expeditions I had frequently noticed that, lurking among the ditches and little connecting streams, there seemed to be more trout than in the main stream. Moreover, whereas the trout when feeding in the main stream were whipped from morning to night, these crafty "ditchers" escaped notice. Here then was my field of campaign, and picking them up here and there I got six more fish that afternoon, each over three-quarters of a pound. Now, Toby, I am only telling you of this for your benefit, and so do not take for braggadocio

what I am now going to confess. I happened not to have a basket with me, for I did not expect to get such a lot, and so I had to carry all my fish in my landing-net. Well, Toby, I must own to feeling a little conceited as I passed all the fishermen on my way home. Officers from the garrison, with the last "new dodge" in mackintoshes and wading boots, and patent prepared lines and winches and nets, and floating may-flies, for which they were willing to give three or four shillings each at the fishing-tackle shops; fishermen from the town and fisher boys from the school lined the bank at as regular intervals as grenadiers on guard, whipping and flogging the stream to no purpose. They certainly stared at my fish, and I was rather proud of myself; and I tell you this, Toby, not to give you a lesson in conceit, but to show you how a little thinking for oneself sometimes beats all the patent rules and patent tackle which can be brought to bear in fishing.

Now, Toby, my object in writing these notes on fishing was to give you some hints on throwing a fly. Last time I told you *how* to throw, and gave you some hints as to *where* it is advisable to throw. But there are two more important branches of the art to be mastered. You must learn *when* to throw, and *what* to throw. There is an old rhyme which is tolerably true as a general rule, but not nearly enough instruction as to *when* to throw. It runs thus—

"When the wind is in the north,
Go home and eat your mutton broth;
When the wind is in the east,
Then the fish will bite the least;
When the wind is in the west,
Then the fish will bite the best;
But when the wind is in the south,
You can throw the bait in the fishes' mouth."

Perhaps you have heard this rhyme already, Toby; but did it ever strike you why all these statements are true? You don't suppose that a trout puts up his back fin as a weathercock, and says, "The wind is in the north to-day, I must not have any dinner, and so it is no use the anglers offering me anything?" Yet the people who first put up weathercocks evidently thought fish knew all about the weather, as well as birds, so frequently do they put up a fish; and it only seems curious that the term is not weatherfish instead of weathercock. Well, Toby, as a matter-of-fact, the wind only affects the fish indirectly.

The real secret of the thing lies here. Insects and flies which trout and fish feed on are being born all through the day. They are many of them ephemeral, living only for a few hours. All these flies require a certain amount of warmth in the air. We can imagine them in their chrysalis and larva skins saying to themselves, "It is very cold out of doors to-day; I am snuggler in my cosy shell such a day as this. I might get cramp or rheumatism in my wings if I was to attempt to face this east wind;" and so they will not come out, but wait for finer times. You can test this for yourself, Toby. Look about on a frosty morning in spring for flies. All you will see will be but midges; they are the only flies, with a few exceptions, which will face the frost. Now here we can get at our first rule as to what to throw on the water. If the weather is cold, and there are no flies about, put on an imitation, not of a *fly*, Toby, but of a *caterpillar*, or perhaps a *beetle*. This is the real secret. The books say, "This month the March brown will be found a killing fly;" and that is true enough, if the weather happens to be warm enough to let them come out and the flies are on the water. But supposing you have had a hard frost the night before, probably no March browns will come out, and you will find it of no good to fish with an imitation of them. So, Toby, when you do not know what flies are about, that is, you have not seen any natural insects on the banks of which you have the imitation in your fly-book, put on a *caterpillar* or *beetle*.

Now for another bit of news on the subject of these caterpillars and beetles. It is a curious fact that they all have more or less the same colour in them during different times of the year, and observation will lead you to the following rule. In the spring their bodies are of a dark tint, such as *black* or *purple*, and these gradually tone down till, a little later, you get *red*, as the colour in the summer, and in the autumn *bright orange*. Toby, it is very important to remember this rule as to the general colour of these creatures' bodies during the year. So, if you are fishing in autumn, do not put on a caterpillar with a *black* body, but *orange*. If you look at that palmer which you bought in the shop yesterday you will see it has a black body, and over this is wound a reddish feather. The black is the body, the feather represents the legs and hairs of the caterpillar. Now listen to this rule. Let the colour of your fly's body be according to the time of year, as I said above; but the colour of his legs, &c., according to the

day, or even the hour, for it is a question of light; that is to say, *light coloured legs, &c., on dark days, and dark on bright days.* This is contrary to the rule in the books, Toby, but it is true to nature. I have not space in this letter to go into the question of flies, and all the varieties which fish feed upon. I have laid stress on the caterpillars and beetles as dishes for a trout's dinner because it is a simple class to understand, and they are what the books call good "general flies." But the rules which have been laid down on the subject of the caterpillars are equally true of all the flies, especially the two-winged flies called the *duns*; and the last rule as to the colour of legs and wings is more easy to understand from their case, so I will give you the reason for the rule, taking them as my example. Supposing it is a very cloudy day, the sky dark, or take the few moments before a heavy shower, when there is a great black bank of clouds in the sky. Look at the water. It is more than ever like a looking-glass. It looks dark. It has reflected the cloud. Look attentively at those flies sailing down on the stream, they look quite light coloured; their gauzy wings, which are practically no colour at all, look quite light on this dark back-ground. The shower comes and goes, and once more the sun shines; the sky is bright blue, the scene changes, the water is bright, and the flies look comparatively black; whereas before it seemed as if there were white flies on ink, there now appear black flies on milk. The same reason will make it advisable to change your fly when you come to a dark hole much overhung by trees. You are fishing in the autumn: you have on an orange-bodied beetle, with a dark, black-red hackle over it, because it is autumn, and the sun is shining. You come to a dark shaded hole. It is still autumn, so keep your orange body, but the sun is not shining on the water, so change your fly for a caterpillar, with a grizzle-grey hackle for the legs, &c. Well, Toby, it is nearly time that I ended this letter full of instructions. If you care to take my advice you will learn to make your own flies, and begin by only making and using caterpillars and beetles. Don't bother your head yet about redspinnars and whirling duns, and this man's favourite and that man's fancy. Get the cook to keep all the hackles, that is the taper feathers from the head all down the neck of the common fowls which are cooked for dinner. Keep them all, as you will need all the colours. Get your sister to give you three skeins or reels of fine strong silk, one red (bright), another orange (bright), and

the third black. I have no doubt she will give you also some scraps of Berlin wool of the same colours; and if you are very good perhaps an old worn-out black ostrich feather from her hat. With these and some hooks of all sizes, and some fine drawn silkworm gut from the shop, you will be able to make yourself a set of flies, or rather of caterpillars and beetles, which will get you a basket of fish on most days during the year; that is, if you will use the right colours on the right days, and remember that when there is a lot of water in the stream the flies must be a little bigger, and when the water is very low, as small as you can make them. No more for the present from

Your affectionate Uncle.

A BROKEN HEART.



IN a garden, in a distant part of England, where the heather purples the surrounding hills, and the cry of the grouse is more familiar to the ear than sounds of human life, is a plain stone inscribed with these words:

DON.

A faithful servant for ten years.

Died of a broken heart.

Ten years before, Don was one of the sporting dogs kept by the owner of the estate in the days when shooting was looked upon as a recreation in which gentlemen exhibited their prowess with the gun and walking, and prided themselves upon the breeding of their pointers and retrievers, and not, as now, in the aggregate results of a merciless *battue*. Don was a pointer of the purest breed. He was the present of a friend, and came "broken," as it is called, to his new home.

One very hot day in August he accompanied his master and the keeper to make his first trial with the grouse on the moors. The sun poured its blazing light on the unshaded heather, and the heat could be seen waving in rolls of thin vapour as it does about a furnace. The dust, too, from the heather bloom was stifling and blinding. True it did no more than powder the gaiters of the master and keeper, but it filled the eyes and noses of the dogs as, head down, they drew up to the game. Then the sharp heather branches below were so cutting to the

feet. Even boots gave way under them, despite the invention of the master, who had copper plates fastened over the toes. Before the day ended more than one dog was dead lame.

During the morning Don had what the keeper called "framed well." He showed decided keenness, and there was little of that wildness about him so common in young dogs. There had been no false points over larks and other small birds that rose before the sportsmen as they tramped their way. At each discharge, like the rest, Don went flat down, not offering to move till the word was given. When luncheon-time came, and the party were gathered by the side of one of the moorland rills, many were the praises bestowed by the master on his sagacity, and more than one piece of sandwich was thrown to him in token of his good services. As it happened, one of Don's companions had, during lunch-time, when the keeper's attention was otherwise directed, stolen a grouse from the game bag, and was quietly feasting unobserved at some distance among the heather. Feathers sticking to his mouth betrayed him when the party rose to resume their sport. Then followed the usual punishment for such misconduct in the form of a very severe castigation from the keeper's whip. The circumstance was of no importance, and it was soon forgotten by all saving probably the culprit, who, if his cries and howls were all genuine, would carry the remembrance of it for some time to come. It was noted, however, afterwards, that from that date Don's behaviour totally altered. He became sullen and stupid, and hung behind his master's heel. At first persuasion and encouragement were tried, but proving of no avail, he was treated roughly. A kick from the master effectually cowed him, and for the remainder of the afternoon he followed behind the party, declining to take any more interest or trouble in the sport. When the afternoon drew on many of the dogs showed signs of fatigue, which, in consequence of the heat, was shared in both by the master and keeper. The order home was given, and the day's shooting came to an end.

"What shall I do with Don, sir?" the keeper asked as they separated at the park gate.

"Well, Ward, I think he won't do. He did fairly enough the first part of the day, but the dog has a poor heart in him. He knocked up directly. You can shoot him this evening, and 'Bell' must take his place. He is quite worthless for the moors."

And with these words the master turned on his heel, not even

giving a look back at the doomed Don, who, with lolling tongue and bleeding feet, stood mutely staring towards the gate.

Now Ward the keeper was by no means a cruel man, and though the order to shoot Don gave him no twinges of compunction in his conscience any more than the order to decapitate a duck would on that score, he nevertheless had economical scruples. He looked at his gun and he looked at Don. He reflected that his master was sometimes rather hasty even with him. Don was a good dog in the morning, why had he turned up so queer in the afternoon? He called Don to him, and he came up readily and licked his hand. His mind was made up now. Whistling the other dogs, the keeper started across the moor towards his own cottage, taking on his way a track they had not disturbed in their beat that day. He spoke kindly to Don, he showed him no whip nor kicked him, and the dog responded to the encouragement. He ranged round, but not too wide, and presently he stood. Yes, there was a covey of birds, and the keeper killed his right and left over the animal he had received orders to execute. Don's life was spared.

A very characteristic speech was made next morning to the master by his keeper.

"You see, sir," he said, "them dogs as is so well bred aint always to be read at a glance. Some of 'em has easy tempers and some hasn't, and it takes time and patience to find out what they're made on. I seed Don droop a bit when I thrashed 'Clo' for mauling that bird, but he took on wuss when you kicked him for coming to your 'eels. So putting two and two together after you was gone, I just gave him another trial, and he worked beautiful. I'll wager, sir, you'll value him more than any of 'em in time. His secret is kindness. Speak softly to him, show him no whip nor kick, and he'll work days together I'll warrant. He's got a beautiful nose, though he's a bit soft in his heart."

The master acted on his keeper's advice, and for ten long years afterwards not one day did he regret that his orders had not been fulfilled. A new phase of existence came upon the inhabitants of the kennels. Never was there less whipping, and rough words, and kicks known before. Frequently, when such punishment was dealt in necessary cases during a shoot, Don would exhibit some of his old soft-hearted tendencies that once nearly cost him his life. But no rough blow or word was given to him. His cleverness and sagacity were the admi-

ration of all who had the pleasure of shooting over him, and he was a universal favourite. But more than this, Don, in the months when the shooting had ceased, was the constant companion of the master's daughter. In her he seemed to find a response to that soft-hearted failing of his, and certainly to no one more than her was he devotedly attached. He was to be seen at her side in all her out-door pursuits, and he accompanied her in daily rides over the purple hills. Not even were the sacred precincts of the drawing-room debarred to him, and he has been seen reposing on the warm rug before the fire at his little mistress's feet when, without, the snow lay thick on his hunting-ground, and the wild winter winds moaned in the fir-trees round the house. So passed the ten faithful years of his life.

It was again a hot August on the moors. Another keeper had come in Ward's place. Not quite so fresh, but still as true as ever he was in his youth, Don followed his master at the opening day. His feet were tougher now than what they were the day of his first trial; but age, and a tendency to what was either rheumatism (or gout perhaps), caused him to move with less ease than formerly. No dog had been punished, and no rough word uttered most of the morning, when unfortunately a young retriever, freshly broken, pursued a winged bird, and instead of bringing it intact to the keeper, tore it literally limb from limb. The master was not in a good temper, nor disposed to overlook such an offence, which was, in the retriever's case, the deadliest that could be given. He had no mouth, and without a tender mouth he was worse than worthless. Not thinking of the dog, but looking merely at the fact of his having spoilt a bird, he turned to the keeper and told him to shoot the animal. The retriever was within a few paces of Don when the keeper fired and killed him. Ward, perhaps, would have remembered the past and not done this. Don went down as usual at the sound of the gun. The master then gave some directions as to the burial of the body on their return, and went forward with the other dogs. Presently he missed Don, and looking back, he saw his white form crouched by the side of the black retriever just as he had dropped when the gun was discharged by the keeper. He whistled, but there was no response. He turned back and came nearer, calling Don by his name. Still there was no movement. Finally, he came up close, and putting his hand down gently, stroked the dog's head. He looked at his eyes: they were fixed and

motionless. *Don was dead!* Naturally supposing that the misdirected aim of the keeper had sent a stray shot into his favourite, that person came in for some severe abuse. In vain, however, did both keeper and master search the white form for the marks of death. Nothing was visible from without. So the day's shooting came to an end, and the two dead bodies were carried homewards; one to be laid outside the kennel in the dog's burial-ground, and the other to find a resting place in the quiet garden where he and his mistress had so often walked together. Before the funeral (for funeral it was with a tender-hearted mourner, who followed her faithful friend) the master had an examination made of Don's body. His heart was found to be burst, and the verdict given was, "Died of a broken heart."

So ends the short story of the gravestone that stands to this day in the garden by the moors. The master, as he takes his morning walk, often stops and reads it, and remembers poor Don. The little mistress (but she is older now) always plucks away the weeds that will grow even on the graves of those we most love. I have seen, too, early snowdrops in her hair, "from Don's grave," as she sits in the evening by the fire where Don sat in bygone days. Like him, she has a tender heart.

Little reader, there is a moral to be gleaned from this true story, and learn it before you put it down. You, as yet, have, happily, nothing to do with broken hearts, and the heart broken here is only that of a dog. Still it tells you what a serious duty a consideration for the feelings of others is. The master, you see, forgot that Don had a tender heart, and he wounded him beyond all recall. Think of this, even in nursery days when you vex one another with trifles. How often it is that tears are shed, and pleasure spoilt, because of such inconsideration! Brothers and sisters, especially, should be tender towards each other. Such tenderness is not unmanly in boys, and will be to them, as they grow up, one of the few distinguishing signs in these days that they are gentlemen. While for girls, when they arrive at older years, it will be a safeguard amid the perils of a world in which, as Tennyson says,

"Never morning wore
To evening, but some heart did break."

Little readers, think of this.

LL.B.

THE GOOD NURSE.



T the house of a friend, where I was detained by a snow-storm, I lighted accidentally on the testimony of the Earl of Shaftesbury to the obligation he owed to his nurse, as having taught him in his earliest years to think on God and His truth. He adds, "I know not where she was buried. She died, I know, in London; and I may safely say that I have ever cherished her memory with the deepest gratitude and affection." Few details are given of this worthy woman; but as the account states that "she entered into rest when I was about seven years old," it has occurred to me that, with Aunt Judy's permission, I would give a brief account of one to whom a friend of mine owed even a deeper debt of gratitude than the respected nobleman whom I have quoted could possibly have felt towards the subject of his grateful record.

Four years before my friend was born, E. B—— entered the service of his family as nursemaid to a sister, and afterwards to a brother, who died. At his own birth his mother was far advanced in years, and I have often heard that the baby was weakly, which caused him to be very much consigned to this good woman's sole care. His family home being in London, they were often sent for months at a time to a farmhouse, or elsewhere in the country, for the benefit of the child's health and rearing; and he always called his nurse "mother," whilst the parent was addressed as "mamma."

During a long sojourn at a farm in Derbyshire, a large hay-knife fell out of a stack, and cut the child's cheek across—the scar of which remains after more than half a century. This dangerous accident brought the real mother from London in the mail-coach of those days; but the child would not go to "that London lady," and the "mother" to whom he clung nursed him through that and various other accidents and sicknesses. Like the noble lord already named, he learned his private prayers from this excellent woman; and above all things she impressed upon his mind such a horror of falsehood, that nothing in the world has ever struck him, as marking the Christian gentleman, like a literal adherence to the strictest truth. He never slept out of her room until he was nearly seven years old, except on one occasion, when he was a night or two from home with his aged father, gudgeon-fishing high up the Thames. Even this separation was a trial. The day

before he was seven years old he was sent to a school of a hundred and twenty boys, and then the close connection was broken; but other duties fell on the nurse.

For six or seven years the child's mother was severely afflicted with illness, and the nurse became her attendant. The father grew paralytic about the same time, and for several years was helped by a valet; but the necessary nursing exceeded the powers and patience of a man, and E. B—— entered into his duties. For about nine years she never left her patient or the house, even to attend a place of public worship. The old couple passed away, aged seventy-eight and eighty-six—both their lives having been prolonged by good nursing—and a daughter of the family became invalided, whilst the fortunes of it were much impaired. The latter circumstance affected the nurse, but only financially; and she devoted herself as completely to the care of her new charge as if she had come from a training institution, and was recompensed accordingly.

Years passed on: the various members of the family found new interests, and in most cases new homes; but the nurse stuck to the family roof-tree, the trusted friend of one invalid. As her nursing labours lightened, the sanctity of her character became more marked in her religious observance of the Lord's day and all Christian duties. Thus, with a surviving daughter of the one family whose bread she had eaten, as servant and friend, for sixty-three years, she came to the close of a noble life. Her mistress was absent for a few days, and on her return she said, with peculiar earnestness, "I am so glad you have come back; I wished you to come." Two days afterwards she was taken ill, and in three days was a corpse—having fervently prayed that she might not lie long on a bed of sickness, to be a burden to any one.

She had saved about 650*l.* during her long service, though exercising munificent charity throughout her life towards those who were in need. In the "Times" newspaper was recorded, "On the 3rd March, 1872, Mrs. E. B——, the faithful friend and servant in one family for sixty-three years: aged eighty-three."

The boy whom she nursed, and who probably owes his life to her care, officiated at her burial as a grey-headed man, and he blesses her memory. *Well done, good and faithful servant; thou hast been faithful over a few things, I will make thee ruler over many things: enter thou into the joy of thy Lord.*

A. G.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER VI.

THINK it was a great relief to Mrs. Vernon to see the skating party come in with their full complement of legs and arms, for the ice was a favourite bugbear of hers, and even Fanny's presence, which she was inclined in general to consider as a talisman that would effectually ward off, not only all dullness, but all danger also, could not quite save her from misgivings.

"My dears, you must be perished!" she began as they came in; but the appearance of the whole party was so very much the reverse of anything that could suggest perishing, that she quickly changed the tone of her greeting. "Why, how fresh and rosy you all look! and," as she felt Maud's hands, "dear me! you are as warm again as we old folks who have been coddling over the fire, are they not Mabel?"

"I should think we were," said Harry. "Nobody who doesn't skate can expect to be properly warm in winter. And we have had such fun, haven't we, Aunt Fanny? You should have seen Maud, mamma, when first we got her up on her skates. I thought I should have died of laughing. She lurched first to one side and then to the other, and then, all in a moment, down she went, with Jack under her and me on the top of her. Such a jolly scrimmage!"

"I hope you didn't hurt yourselves."

"Oh no! not in the least; did we, Aunt Fanny?"

Fanny Arnott said she had not hurt *herself*, but she really could not undertake to answer for how much anybody else might have suffered; only this she would say, that if they had hurt themselves they had taken a very cheerful view of their injuries.

It was very pleasant sitting round the fire and talking over the afternoon's doings—so pleasant that Maud said she was not sure whether after all the pleasantest part of skating was not coming in to tea after it.

"Do you often go to the play in London, Aunt Fanny?" asked Jack, who was turning over the "Illustrated London News," and wishing he had a chance of seeing one of the many beautiful pantomimes of which it contained pictures.

"Not very often."

"But you go sometimes?"

"Oh! yes, sometimes. You seem to think me a very enviable person for doing so."



"Yes, I do. I have only been once to the play in my life, and it was the best fun I ever had. Don't you like it very much?"

"Very much indeed, if it is a good play."

"Did you ever act in a play, Aunt Fanny?" asked Maud.

"Yes, I have done that too, and I am not sure that it is not almost better fun than seeing a play."

"Why should not we act a play?" said Harry.

"Why not?" said Aunt Fanny.

"May we, mamma?" asked Maud.

"Can we?" said Jack.

Mrs. Vernon gave permission, and Fanny Arnott said she thought they would be quite able to do it.

"You see," she said "the drawing-room would make a capital theatre. We could hang a curtain across the end of the room where the pillars are, and as one door is one side of the pillars and the other door on the other side, we should have no difficulty about getting separate entrances for the actors and the audience. And I noticed the other day when you took me up into the lumber room that you had a number of old screens stowed away which, if we may paint them and make windows and doors in them (may we, Clara?), will do beautifully for scenery."

"You may do what you like with the screens," said Mrs. Vernon.

"And what shall we have for a curtain?" said Harry.

"I think we have got as many old curtains as old screens."

"That's delightful; we shall have no difficulty about stage furniture I see."

"It will be splendid fun," said Harry; "but what shall we act?"

"Ah, that is the question."

And a very difficult question it proved. Fanny Arnott knew of a great many plays, and the Vernons knew of some; but there was some objection to each one that was mentioned. Some could not be thought of because they were babyish, others because they were too difficult. Some, again, were perfect in themselves, but required too many actors, while others had not parts enough. Then there were difficulties connected with scenery. No play could be chosen that required very elaborate or very frequently changing scenes.

Altogether, it seemed at one time that the delightful scheme would have to be relinquished for want of a play. At last Mrs. Vernon suggested that they should write their own play.

"I wish we could," said Jack, dolefully.

"You could, Aunt Fanny," said Maud. It was by this time an article of faith at Everton that Aunt Fanny could do *anything*.

"I!" exclaimed Fanny; "I think I should not get on much better at playwriting than the great Augustus himself."

"Couldn't we make a play about Augustus?"

"Happy thought!" said Harry; and they all turned the happy thought over in their minds for five minutes, but without coming to any satisfactory result.

Maud broke the silence. "Aunt Fanny, do you know a book called 'Lost Legends of Nursery Rhymes?'"

"Yes, I do, and a very nice book it is."

"Well, there is a story in that book that I think might be turned into a good play."

"Pray tell us about it. I was just beginning to despair; and as for Harry and Jack, they look melancholy to the last degree."

The story that Maud had thought of was, "Hark, hark, the dogs do bark," and she was just beginning to set forth how very suitable it was to their purpose, when Harry objected, saying that he didn't intend to act nursery rhymes or any other babyish stuff. "Much better have a regular, good grown-up play like 'Box and Cox,' or 'Julius Cæsar.'"

The alternative was amusing; "Box and Cox," or "Julius Cæsar;" and Harry could not help joining in the laugh it raised, which put him back into a good humour.

Fanny submitted that "Lost Legends" were not babyish, and that after all they need only borrow the outline of the plot, which they might work up into as dignified a drama as they pleased; and that if Harry liked to do so, there was nothing to prevent his putting it into blank verse. But Harry thought there was a good deal to prevent his doing this. However, as he consented to hear the story before finally putting his veto on it, the book was fetched, the story read, and unanimously approved.

"The scenery will be easy enough to manage," said Maud, "for everything happens in the kitchen."

"Ah! but I think we must alter that," replied her aunt; "that would be dull and ugly. We must have scenes in fine rooms in the palace, and scenes in the dungeon as well as scenes in the kitchen."

"That would be better, certainly, if we can manage it all."

"If Aunt Fanny can manage it, you'd better say, Maud. I expect she will have to contrive everything."

"Oh! we must all work together."

"But you will write the play, won't you?" urged Maud.

"Well, now that you have provided me with a plot, I don't mind promising to try what I can do in the way of working it up into a play. I think I shall have to introduce a character who does not appear in the original story—a maid of honour who shall be betrothed to Edelherz, and who shall fly with the queen when Shurk takes possession of the palace."

"But she must come back."

"Of course she must come back, and she must marry Edelherz, and they must live happily ever after. But the first thing to be done is to count up how many parts we shall have, and decide who will be who. To begin, then, there's Edelherz."

"And the queen."

"Yes, but we must be business-like, and count up the men first and then the women. Let me see, there's Edelherz, and there are the two kings and the butler; we had better call him the seneschal, it sounds grander."

"And the man-cook," said Jack; "that's five; and as there are only Harry and me to take the men's parts, I don't see how it is to be done."

"What a desponding boy you are! We can quite well leave out the cook; he is not at all necessary to the play, and with a very little ingenuity it can be managed that one actor shall take both the seneschal's and Siegfried's parts. There is no reason why they should ever come on the stage at the same time; and, in the same way, if we find it convenient to bring in the sentinel, we can make Shurk take his part by throwing a big military cloak over his king's dress. And in that way, you see, we shall only want three gentlemen."

"But Jack and I are only two."

"Would not Mr. Mildmay take a part?"

"Oh! of course he would; we'll go over and ask him to-morrow. He had better be Siegfried and the seneschal."

Then followed a lively discussion as to which of the boys should be Edelherz, and which Shurk and the sentinel; which Fanny Arnott brought to a close by suggesting that they should first decide who should be the queen, and then, considering that in the story she had to disguise herself in the page's dress, they should choose for Edelherz whichever boy came nearest to the royal stature; as, even supposing the queen did not appear on the stage in her disguise, it would be as well that the success of the disguise should seem to the audience

possible, which it hardly could if there were a great difference of height between her page and herself. That Fanny should take the part of Holda seemed to every one the best arrangement, for it was felt that it would be hardly right for the maid of honour to be taller than her sovereign, and Maud was a good two inches shorter than her aunt; so Harry, who had already ascertained, with much satisfaction to himself, that the difference between his height and Fanny's was scarcely perceptible, claimed the part of Edelherz.

"But when will you write the play?" asked Maud; "you will have so little time, for we have got all those dolls to dress, and we have only a fortnight's holidays left. What a pity we did not think of it sooner!"

Aunt Fanny reassured her by promising that the play should be written by the day after to-morrow, which, supposing they acted it on the last day of the holidays, would leave plenty of time for learning parts and rehearsing.

"But the dresses; they will take a long time to make, and how are we ever to get a blue velvet gown for the queen?"

Mrs. Vernon thought, nay, was sure, that she had a very old blue velvet gown which they might cut into any shape they liked; and so one difficulty after another vanished, and before they went to bed that night the play had become quite a settled thing.

(To be continued.)

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



N sitting down to answer the letters of her nephews and nieces this month, Aunt Judy finds that no less than ten of them contain announcements of stamps and monograms to be exchanged or collected, and she feels obliged to make a protest against occupying so much space in the limited amount allowed for her correspondence by inserting these advertisements, which she thinks are more suited to "The Queen," or some regular exchange paper. She is very glad to be the means of promoting exchanges between collectors of any branch of natural history, or other interesting pursuit, but hopes her young

friends will forgive her for not viewing the amassing of old postage stamps from the same point of view; and that they will not be deterred in future from applying to her for any information which she is likely to be able to help them with.

"Isoline" will find a receipt for making a stamp snake in our number for April, 1871.

"Constance" asks for a "good book for a collection of stamps," and would like to know the price.

Two correspondents write to inform the "Highdown Sisters" that the origin of *kettle-drum*, as applied to afternoon

tea, arose from the fact that large evening-parties used formerly to be called *drums*, and when these early tea-gatherings came in fashion some wag named them *kettle-drums*, in allusion to the *tea-kettle*. "L. E. W." adds that *drum* may be derived from the Danish word *dromme*, i.e., a crowd of people. In "Notes and Queries" (4th Series, vol. ii. p. 157) we find the following: "Drum. I do not know the origin of the popular name of this entertainment of the present day, but that it dates far back is shown by this extract from a quaint book, entitled 'The History of Pompey the Little. Printed for Mr. Cooper, at the Globe, in Paternoster, 1751.' 'A drum is at present the highest object of female vainglory; the end whereof is to assemble as large a mob of quality as can possibly be contained in one house; and great are the honours paid to that lady who can boast of the largest crowd . . . The higher call nothing but a crowd a drum, whereas the lower often give that name to the commonest parties.' W. T. M."

"Zie and Madeline" ask, "Can any one kindly tell us of nice things likely to sell at a bazaar? Anything we can make ourselves we shall be glad to know of." This is a puzzling request, as we are unacquainted with their age and capabilities; but do they not think that children's frocks and pinafores, or any *useful* articles, are the most easy to dispose of?

"M. G. C." informs "Mortimer Lightwood" that the lines he asked for are the concluding ones of a poem by Arthur H. Clough on the Italian struggles for liberty in 1849. It commences:

"Say not the struggle nought availeth."

"Jabberwocky," "W. F.," and "Constance," say that the quotation from Shakespeare about which "F. M. H." inquired, is to be found in King Henry VI., Part ii., Act 4, Scene 3.

"Fambo" asks if any one will lend her a stamp snake as a pattern, in return for which she will be happy to lend some books, and forward a list if required. Address, Miss Buckston, the Ash, Derby.

"Edith" wishes to thank the correspondents who have kindly sent her the names of nice German magazines. She thinks some of our readers may like to see a list of those recommended: "Daheim" (which she is taking in, and finds very interesting), "Jugend-Blätter," "Die Gartenlaube," "Baumgarten," "Westermann's Illustirte Monats-Hefte," and "Ueber Land und Meer."

"Bee." "Fairholt's Book on Costumes" is illustrated, and would give all the information you require. It is now out of print, but might be obtained from a library, or perhaps from Messrs. Rimell, Oxford Street, London.

"E. H. G." There is a book entitled "Little Plays for Little People" (published by Messrs. Bell & Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden), which would perhaps suit you. Messrs. Dean & Son (65, Ludgate Hill) have also published some plays for children. Can any one recommend "E. H. G." a nice book containing "the lives of all the saints," with the price, and names of author and publisher?

"Little Mary Seagrave." The valentine and new shilling you so kindly sent to "Toby," were duly received, and gave her great delight.

"Marguerite." "Fowst" is the nearest description Aunt Judy can give of the pronunciation you ask about.

"Cherry-blossom." The origin of Punch and Judy is a disputed point, and involved in much obscurity from its antiquity. You will do well to read Mr. Cruikshank's very interesting book on the subject, illustrated by himself (published by Messrs. Bell and Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden).

"Waterlily." Aunt Judy has been asked by several other young friends as to the allegorical meaning of "The Boy in Grey." She is unable, however, to attempt to guess it, as she has not read the story. Are her correspondents sure that Mr. Kingsley attached any more definite moral to his boy hero than the Rev. Charles Kingsley did to his enchanting "Water Babies?"

"May" asked in our February number what the initials "M. E. T." stand for on a brooch. "A. J." suggests that they may mean "Meum et Tuum." Aunt Judy does not think that any of the songs in "Through the Looking-glass" are *parodies*, except the one commencing:

"To the looking-glass world it was Alice that said;"

which is in the same metre as "Bonnie Dundee."

"A Travelled Monkey." You had better apply to the publisher of "Lines left out" for the information you require, as Aunt Judy cannot tell you. The only instance in which *hanged* is used as the participle of *to hang* is in reference to an *execution*. Clothes, beef, pictures, &c., are all *hung*.

"Lou and Frank." Aunt Judy supposes that you mean the twelve *Apostles*, not *disciples*. She must refer you to the Bible for information.

"Mary A. Eden." Aunt Judy is glad to find that you were so much interested in the hero of "A Flat Iron," as to wish to read a story about his children; but you must remember that the Editor cannot dictate to the contributors what they are to be inspired to write about, and Mrs. Ewing is now busy writing "Six to Sixteen," which Aunt Judy hopes will be as popular as her last story. This remark must apply also to "Clorinda Chimney Sweep" and "Patrick Sailor Boy," who ask for a tale by another favourite author.

"Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedonby" asks if any one will kindly lend her a postage stamp snake as a pattern, for a few days. Address, the Hon. L. Byng, 5, St. James' Square, London, S.W. The "Scaramouches," and "Tour of the Bunniwinks," have not yet been published in a volume together. Another story by the same author appeared in our number for November, 1871, entitled "Left at Home." Aunt Judy does not know whether there is a sequel to "The Wide Wide World." The Secretary of the Children's Hospital feels no doubt that "Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedonby's" kind present of toys arrived at Christmas, as a great number of such parcels were received at that time, but many anonymously, or with such meagre intimation inside that it was extremely difficult to chronicle them all, and about sixteen or seventeen that came were unable to be acknowledged.

"Psyche" asks if any one can tell her where to find a poem called "Happy ones," beginning, "There are in this loud stem-ming tide?"

Can any one supply "Florrie C." with the names of the authors of the following hymns?—

"Lord of my life, whose tender care
Hath led me on till now."

"Almighty God, Thy throne above
No time can change, no power can move."

"Welcome, sacred day of rest;
Sweet repose from worldly care."

"This day by Thy creating Word,
First o'er the earth the light was pour'd."

"With hearts in love abounding,
Prepare we now to sing."

"In Thee, O Lord, I trust;
My hope is in Thy name."

"O Lord! in all our trials here,
Whate'er those trials be."

"Almighty Father! robed with light,
Seated upon Thy heavenly throne."

"Thou boundless Source of every good!
Our best desires fulfil."

"Peaseblossom." Almost any kind of toys are acceptable—dressed dolls, puzzle pictures, Noah's arks, &c., &c.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, April 15th, 1872.

Little Mary E—, who was introduced to Aunt Judy's readers as the Cot patient last month, is progressing favourably, and has been recommended change of air for a week or two. She has, therefore, gone to Cromwell House, Highgate, and will probably return to the Hospital again. On the day of Mary's departure, "Toby" returned from Highgate, and was, of course, reinstated in the vacant cot, as it seemed her unquestionable right to be the occupant. Some little presents from anonymous friends, specially addressed to Mary, were forwarded direct to her at Highgate, and some others remain in "Toby's" undisputed possession; unless, as is the case in some instances, the gift is too fragile and pretty to be trusted in the hands of the little mischievous puss (who must know the why and the wherefore of everything), it is then kept for her until she is older and wiser; or she is encouraged to cultivate generosity, by giving it to some less fortunate little patient. The day on which this report is written little Toby has to undergo an operation intended to straighten her poor little leg; and perhaps the young friends will be surprised to hear that the poor little mite has no fear at all in prospect of it, but rather looks with pleasure to the result. Little Annie, who had to undergo a similar trial, was older and had painful anticipations, as it will be remembered that she had much difficulty in being good and brave, and that she cried very much when she caught sight of the preparations; but little "Toby" points to the splints, and says significantly, "mine." When asked, "Is Toby going to have two straight legs?" she holds up the little fat crippled limb, and triumphantly says, "Yes." Certain it is that all the young friends and supporters of the Cot will unite in good wishes and prayers that their little favourite may do well after this second severe operation. Under the influence of chloroform, gently administered, she will lay her little curly

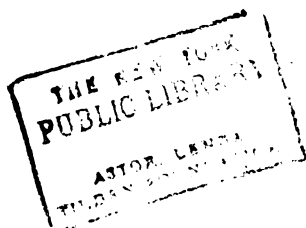
head upon the pillow and fall fast asleep; she will know no pain until she awakes again, and then all that can be done by human skill, with kind words and loving deeds, will be done: the result must be left with Him "who doeth all things well."

Little Toby sat, or rather reclined, in the "Aunt Judy's Cot" for her portrait a few days ago, and it is hoped that a more successful picture will result than that produced before, when the light was unfavourable. It has been taken by Mr. Faulkner, of 46, Kensington Gardens Square, whose photographs of children are already so justly famous. He has taken infinite pains to secure a really pretty picture of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," and it is proposed at as early a date as possible, when a sufficient number of the cartes are printed, to present a copy to every contributor to the Cot Fund, as a fitting celebration of the completion of the amount subscribed for the permanent establishment of the Cot. The sum of 1000*l.* has now been received, and by the generous permission and hearty approval of the Editor, all future contributions will be entered to an account for a second Cot, to be placed in the Boys' ward; the first "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot" being now permanently kept in the Girls' ward. Contributors desiring to possess a copy of the Photograph of the Cot, will be supplied after the 16th May, by applying to the Secretary, and enclosing an addressed and stamped envelope.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to April 15th, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
Annie and Katharine (annual)	0	7	0
"In memoriam, 10th April, 1859, Meta's birthday; she died, 27th September, 1870"			
(annual)		0	10 0
Susan and Harriett (monthly)	0	2	0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)		0	1 0
Maude and Mildred, also a few flowers, and violets (monthly)	0	2	0
S. D. Spicer, Spyre Park, Chippenham		0	5 0
M. A. F. (monthly)		0	0 6
Little Frankie (monthly)		0	1 0
Beaver (monthly)		0	2 6
The Black Kitten (every other month)		0	0 6

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Little Muriel	0	2	9	Nellie and Innes	1	12	6
Fine for breaking a vase,				Constance Bird	0	0	6
J. P. L. D.	0	2	6	Bockey, 2s. 6d., Fambo, the			
For "Toby," J. P. L. D.	0	0	6	Ash Plant, 1s.	0	3	6
Little Judy	0	1	0	Reggie, Shrewsbury	0	1	0
Mrs. Doasyouwouldbedoneby	0	2	6	Samson and Tiny	0	2	0
A little white dog	0	0	6	"A Thankoffering that the			
Netta, Scarcroft	0	5	0	hunting season is over, from a			
Hermione and Sybil Baker, two				wife and mother"	1	0	0
little Sisters	0	10	0	Alice, Barnstaple	0	2	6
Padre and Bebelles, 6d., Padre,				The Clarghyll Pugs	0	3	0
2s. 6d., Madre, 2s., Peggy, 6d.				Bob Cherry	0	0	6
Bee, 6d., Sunbury-on-Thames	0	6	0	A and C., 45 High Street, Eton	0	0	6
Letty	0	2	0	"E.B., at rest, M. G., waiting"	1	0	0
Mamma, 5s., A. H., 5d., G., 6d.,				Dodo, Chip, Nep, Baby, the			
L. B., 1d., collected, 7s.	0	13	0	Mermaid, the Gipsy Queen,			
A. D. Greenwood	0	0	6	and the Money-box maker,			
Annie and Nelly Maxwell, St.				Alderley Edge	0	1	10
Petersburg	1	5	0	Evelyn and George, 5s., Agnes,			
Nina, Willie, Violet, Mary and				5s.	0	10	0
Lawrence, 9s., Martha Hum-				Courcy, Herbert, Gerty, Grace,			
lin, 1s., Alice Openshaw, 6d.,	0	10	6	Ethel, Little Pug, Papa,			
"Granny," Bickley, Kent	1	0	0	Mamma	0	10	0
An Easter Offering	0	5	0	Constance Briggs, Catherington			
Scagina, 6d., Constance, 6d.,				House, Horndean, Hants, col-			
Freda, 6d.	0	1	6	lected	0	10	6
Little Bonny Boy	0	3	0	R. Stratford, Addington	0	1	0
F. S. W., Dublin	0	1	0	Two little birds	0	3	6
Collected by the "Devonshire				Fines	0	1	0
Dumplings," Mamma, 6d.,				Mary, Ethel, Cyril and Hilda			
Lolly, 6d., Ferny, 3d., Susie				Haking, Rodbourne, a parcel			
Sunshine, 6d., Grannie, 2d.,				of clothing, and 1s. to buy			
Little Mischief, 1d.	0	2	0	oranges.			
A Farmer, 2s. 6d., a Farmer's				Mary Seagrave, Bedford, for			
Wife, 2s. 6d., Sweep, 1s.,				"Toby"	0	1	0
Punch, 1s., Jack, 1s., Tobias,				A. A., H. G., and L. B., some			
1s., Charlie, 1s., Grey Momus,				toys and clothing.			
2s. 6d.	0	12	6	Nelly, Flax Bourton, a large doll.			
"In memoriam, Johnny's birth-				Mrs. Buckley, a book-marker.			
day, Canterbury, April 3rd,				Mary and Clara Elliot, a volume			
1872"	1	0	0	of "Sunshine."			
"Kitty," Queen's Gate	0	1	6	Miss Mary Blanche Mortlock,			
A little lover of Aunt Judy	0	0	8	Great Malvern, a box of toys.			
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie	0	1	3	Amy and Lilian, forty-three			
Mamma, 2s. 6d., Aunt Chillie,				numbers of "Chatterbox."			
2s. 6d., Puss, 2s. 6d., Sibbie,				Ethel Marian Joy, a parcel of			
2s., Charlie, 1s.	0	10	0	clothing.			
Collected by R. W. Barker:				Effie, one of Aunt Judy's busy-			
Nora Barker, 6d., Father and				bees, three Rob Roy jackets,			
Mother, 2s., A. F. R., 6d.,				and a flannel petticoat.			
May Barker, 4d., Stray				Laura and Ernest, two little			
Pennies, 1s. 8d.	0	5	0	helpers at Cambridge, five			
"A Springer," and "Trichino-				scrap-books and a pillow.			
poly," Lucknow, India	0	5	0	Spot and Pip, a box of prim-			
Deepina Ziffo, a reader of "Aunt				roses for the occupants of the			
Judy"	0	1	0	"Cot."			





SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XIV.

AT SCHOOL.—THE LILAC BUSH.—BRIDGET'S POSIES.—HEALTH.



E knew when it was summer at Bush House, because there was a lilac-tree by the gate, which had one large bunch of flowers on it in the summer when Eleanor, and I, and Maria were at school there. As we left the house in double file to take our daily exercise on the high road, the girls would bob their heads to catch a whiff of the scent as they passed, or to let the cool, fragrant flowers brush their foreheads. On this point Madame, our French governess, remonstrated in vain. We took turns for the side next to the lilac, and sniffed away as long as there was anything to smell. Even when the delicate colour began to turn brown, and the fragrance vanished, we were loth to believe that the blossoms were fading.

"I think I have got a cold in my head," said Maria, who had plunged her nose into the cluster one day in vain.

"You have a cough, *ma foi!* Mademoiselle Buller," replied Madame, who seemed to labour under the idea that Maria rather enjoyed this privilege. But I had tried the lilac-bush myself with no better success.

"I think," I whispered to Eleanor, in English, "that we have smelt it all up."

"Parlez vous français, Mesdemoiselles!" cried Madame, and we filed out into the dusty street, at the corner of which sat another of our visible tokens of the coming of the season of flowers: a dirty, shrivelled old Irishwoman, full of benedictions and beggary, who, all through the summer, sold "posies" to the passers-by. We schoolgirls were good customers to her. We were all more or less sentimental, more or less home-sick, and had more or less of that susceptibility to the influence of scents which may, some day, be the basis of a new school of medicine. One girl had cultivated pinks and *roses de Meaux* in her own garden "at home," and Bridget was soon wise enough to discover that a nosegay composed of these materials

was an irresistible temptation to that particular customer. Another had a craving for the sight and smell of southernwood (or "old man," as Eleanor called it), and preferred it in combination with bachelor's buttons.

"There was an old woman 'at home' whom we used to go to tea with when we were children—my brother and I," she said; "there were such big bunches of southernwood by her cottage. And bachelor's buttons all round the garden."

The brother was dead, I know, and there were two flattened "buttons," and a bit of withered "old man," gummed into her Bible. "Picked the last day we were out together. Before he was taken ill, with scarlet fever," she told me. She had the boy's portrait in a standing frame, and, little room as we had in our bedrooms, the other girls piled their brushes and ribbon-boxes on one side of the looking-glass as best they could, and left the rest of the dressing-table sacred to his picture, and to the Bible, and the jar of Bridget's flowers, which stood before the likeness as if it had been that of a patron saint.

For my own part I was very ignorant of the names and properties of English flowers. I knew some by sight, from my great-grandfather's sketches; and I knew the names of others of which Adolphe had given me plants, and of which I was glad to see the flower. As I had plenty of pocket-money I was a liberal customer, and I made old Bridget tell me the names of the flowers in her bunches. I have since found out that whenever she was at fault she composed a name upon the spot, with the ready wit and desire to please characteristic of her nation. These names were chiefly connected with the Blessed Virgin and the saints.

"The Lord blesh ye, my dear," she would say; "that's 'Mary's flower;'" or, "Sure it's the 'Blessed Virgin's spinning-wheel,' and a pretty name too!"

A bitter-smelling herb which she commended to me as "Saint's Savory," I afterwards learned to be tansy.

The youngest of us, a small, silent little orphan, had bought no posy, till one day she quietly observed, "If you could get me a pæony I would buy it."

The pæony was procured; so large, so round and red that some one unfeelingly suggested that it should be cut up for pickled cabbage.

The little miss walked home with it in her hand, looking at it as sentimentally as if it had been a forget-me-not. As we had been unfeeling enough to laugh at it we never learned the history which made it dear.

Madame would certainly never have allowed us to break our ranks, and chaffer with Bridget, but that some one had been lucky enough to think of giving her bouquets.

Madame liked flowers—as ornaments—and was sentimental herself, after a fashion, a sentimentality of appearances. She liked a bright spot of colour on her sombre dresses too, and she was economical; for every day that she had a bright bouquet a day's wear and tear was saved to her neckribbons. She pinned the bright flowers by her very clean collar, and not very clean throat, and permitted us to supply ourselves also from Bridget's basket.

A less pleasant sign of summer than the lilac-blossom or Bridget's flower-basket was the heat. It was hot in the dusty, draughty streets of the little town. The empty bedrooms at Bush House were like ovens, and the well-filled schoolroom was much worse. Madame would never hear any complaints of the heat from me or from Maria. Summer at Bush House, in the nature of things, could be nothing to summer in India, to which we were accustomed. It was useless to point out that in India our heaviest meal, our longest walk, and our hardest work did not come into the hottest hours of the day.

"England is at no time so warm as India," said Madame.

"I suppose we are not as hot as the cook," suggested little "Pæony," as we now called her, one very hot day, when we sat languidly struggling through our work in the stifling atmosphere of the schoolroom. "I thought of her to-day when I looked at that great fat leg of roast mutton. We're better off than she is."

"And she's better off than if she were in the Black Hole of Calcutta; but that doesn't make either her or us cool," said Emma Lascelles, an elder girl. "Don't preach, Pæony; lessons are bad enough in this heat."

"I shan't eat any dinner to-morrow, I think," said Eleanor; "I cannot keep awake after it this weather, so it's no use."

"I wish I were back at Miss Martin's for the summer," said another girl.

We knew to what this referred, and Madame being by a rare chance absent, we pressed for an account, in English, of Miss Martin's

arrangements in the hot weather. "Miss Martin's" was a school at which this girl had been before she came to Bush House.

"I can't think why on earth you left her," said Eleanor.

"Well, this is nearer home for one thing, and the masters are better here, certainly. But she did take such care of us. It wasn't everlasting backaches, and headaches, and coughs, and pains in your side all along. And when the weather got hot (and it was a very warm summer when I was there), and she found we got sleepy at work after dinner, and headaches in the afternoon, she said she thought we had better have a scrap meal in the middle of the day, and dine in the cool of the evening; and so we used to have cold rice-pudding or thick bread and butter, such as we should have had for tea, or anything there was, and tumblers of water at one, and at half-past five we used to wash and dress; and then at six, just when we were getting done up with the heat and work, and still cool enough to eat, we had dinner. I can tell you a good fat roast leg of mutton looked all right then! It cured all our headaches, and we worked twice as well, both at midday work and at getting lessons ready for next day after dinner. I know——"

"Tais-toi, Lucy," hissed Pæony, through her teeth: "Madame!"

"Donnez moi cette grammaire, Marguerite, s'il vous plait," said Lucy, as Madame entered. And I gave her the grammar, and we set to work again, full of envy for the domestic arrangements of Miss Martin's establishment during the dog-days.

If there is a point on which Eleanor and I are quite agreed, among the many points we discuss, it is that of the need for a higher education for women. But ill as I think our sex provided for in this respect, and highly as I value good teaching, I would rather send a growing girl to a Miss Martin, even for fewer "educational advantages," and let her start in life with a sound, healthy constitution, and a reasonable set of nerves, than have her head crammed and her health neglected under "the first masters," and so good an overseer as "Madame" to boot.

For Madame certainly made us work, and was herself indefatigable.

The reckless imprudence of most girls in matters of health is proverbial, the wisdom of young matrons in this respect is not beyond reproach, and the lore which long and painful experience has given to older ones is apt, like other lessons from that stern teacher, to come

too late. It should at least avail to benefit their daughters, were it not that custom prescribes that they also should be kept in the dark till instructed in turn by the lamentable results of their ignorance, too often only when these are past repair.

Whether, though there are many things that women have no knowledge of, and many more of which their knowledge is superficial, their lack of learning on these points being erudition compared with their crass ignorance of the laws of health, the matter is again one of education; or whether it is an unfortunate development of a confusion between ignorance and innocence, and of mistaken notions of delicacy, who can say? Unhappily, a studied ignorance of the ills that flesh is heir to is apt to bring them in double force about one's ears, and this kind of delicate-mindedness to bring delicacy of body in its train. Where it guides the counsels of those in charge of numbers of young people (as in Miss Mulberry's case) it is apt to result in the delicacy (more or less permanent) of several bodies.

But I am forgetting that I am not "preaching" to Eleanor by the kitchen fire, but writing my autobiography.

I am forgetting also that I have not yet said who Miss Mulberry was.

CHAPTER XV.

MISS MULBERRY.—DISCIPLINE AND RECREATION.—MADAME.—CONVERSATION.

—ELEANOR'S VIEWS ON THE DRAWING MASTER.—MISS ELLEN'S.

MISS MULBERRY was our schoolmistress, and the head of the Bush House establishment. "Madame" was only a French mistress, employed by Miss Mulberry, though she had more to do with the pupils than Miss Mulberry herself.

Miss Mulberry was stout, and I think by nature disposed to indolence, especially in warm weather. It was all the more creditable to her that she had worked hard for many years to support a paralytic mother, and a delicate sister. The mother was dead now. Miss Ellen Mulberry, though an invalid, gave some help in teaching the younger ones, and Bush House had for so long been a highly-reputed establishment, that Miss Mulberry was more or less prosperous, and could afford to keep a French governess to do the hard work.

Miss Mulberry was very conscientious, very kind-hearted, and the pink of propriety. Her appearance, at once bland and solid, produced

a favourable impression upon parents and guardians. Being stout, and between fifty and sixty years old, she was often described as "motherly," though in the timidity, fidgetiness, and primness of her dealing with girls, she was essentially a spinster.

Her good conscience and her timidity both helped to make her feel school-keeping a heavy responsibility, which should, perhaps, excuse the fact that we suffered at Bush House from an excess of the meddling discipline which seems to be *de rigueur* in girls' schools. I think Miss Mulberry would have felt that she had neglected her duty if we had ever been left to our own devices for an hour.

To growing girls, not too robust, leading sedentary lives, working very hard with our heads, and having (wholesome and sufficient meals, but) not as much animal food as most of us were accustomed to at home, the *nag* of never being free from supervision was both irritating and depressing. Much worse off were we than boys at school. No playing fields had we; no leave could be obtained for walks alone together. Our dismal exercise was a promenade in double file under the eye and ear of Madame herself.

True, we were allowed fifteen minutes' "recreation" together, and by ourselves, in the schoolroom, just after dinner; but this inestimable privilege was always marred by the fact that Madame invariably came for us before the quarter of an hour had expired. No other part of school discipline annoyed us as this did. It had the element of injustice, against which children always rebel. Why she did so remains to this day a puzzle to me. She worked very hard for her living; a fact which did not occur to us in those days to modify our view of her as our natural tormentor. In breaking faith with us daily by curtailing our allotted fifteen minutes of recreation, she deprived herself of rest to the exact amount by which she defrauded us.

She cannot have pined to begin to teach as soon as she had swallowed her food! I may do her an injustice, but the only reason I can think of as a likely one, is that, by taking us unawares, she (I won't say hoped, but) expected to find us "in mischief."

It was a weak point of the arrangements of Bush House that Miss Mulberry left us so much to the care of Madame. Madame was twice as energetic as Miss Mulberry. Madame never spared herself if she never spared us. Madame was indefatigable, and in her own way as conscientious as Miss Mulberry herself. But Madame was not just, and

she was not truthful. She had—either no sense at all, or—a quite different sense from ours of honour and uprightness. Perhaps the latter, for she seemed to break promises, tell lies, open letters, pry into drawers and boxes, and listen at keyholes, from the highest sense of duty. And, which was even worse for us, she had no belief whatever in the trustworthiness of her pupils.

Miss Mulberry felt it to be her duty towards our parents and guardians to keep us under constant supervision; but Madame watched and worried us, I am convinced, in the persuasion that we were certain to get into mischief if we had the chance, and equally certain to do so deceitfully. She gave us full credit (I never could trace that she saw any discredit in deceit) for slyness in evading her authority, but flattered herself that her own superior slyness would maintain it in spite of us.

It vexed us all, but there were times when it irritated Eleanor almost to frenzy. She would have been in disgrace oftener, and more seriously, on the subject, but that Madame was a little afraid of her, and was, I think, not a little fond of her.

Madame was a clever woman, and a good teacher. She was sharp-witted, ready of tongue, and indefatigably industrious herself; and slow, stupid, or lazy girls, found no mercy at her hands.

Eleanor's unusual abilities, the extent of her knowledge and reading on general subjects, the rapidity with which she picked up conversational French, and wielded it in discussions with Madame, and finally, her industry and perseverance, won Madame's admiration and goodwill. I think she almost believed that Mademoiselle Arkwright's word was to be relied upon.

Eleanor never toadied her, which I fear we others (we were so utterly at her mercy!) did sometimes; assuming an interest we did not feel in her dissertations on the greatness of France, and the character of her especial idol, the first Napoleon. '

If Madame respected Eleanor, we schoolgirls almost revered her.

"She talks so splendidly," Lucy said one day.

Not that the rest of us were by any means dumb. The fact that English was forbidden did not silence us, and on Sunday, when (to Madame's undisguised chagrin) Miss Mulberry allowed us to speak English, we chattered like sparrows during an anthem.

But Eleanor introduced a kind of talk which was new to most of us.

We could all chatter of people, and places, and what was said on this occasion, or what happened on another. We had one good mimic (Emma), and two or three of us were smart in description. We were observant of details and appearances, and we could, one and all, "natter" over our small grievances without wearying of the subject, and without ever speculating on their causes, or devising a remedy for them.

But, with Eleanor, facts served more as points to talk from, than as talk in themselves. Through her influence the *Why* and *How* of things began to steal into our conversation. We had more discussion and less gossip, and found it better fun. "One never tells you anything without your beginning to argue about it," said one of the girls to her one day.

"I'm very sorry," said poor Eleanor.

"You're very clever, you mean," said Emma. "What a lawyer you'd have made, Eleanor! While we growl at the Toad's tyranny, you make a case out of it."

(I regret to have to confess that, owing to a peculiarity of complexion, Madame was familiarly known to us, behind her back, as the Toad.)

"Well, I don't know," said Eleanor, puckering her brows, and nursing her knees, as we all sat or lounged on the schoolroom floor, during the after-dinner recreation minutes, in various awkward but restful attitudes; "I can growl as well as anybody, but I never feel satisfied with bemoaning over and over again that black's black. One wants to find out why it's black, and if anything would make it white. Besides, I think perhaps when one looks into one's grievances, one sees excuses for people—there are two sides to every question."

"There'll be one, two, three"—said Emma, looking slowly round and counting the party with a comical imitation of Eleanor's grave air—"there'll be fifteen sides to every question by the time we've all learnt to talk like you, my dear."

Eleanor burst out laughing, and we most of us joined her to such good purpose, that Madame overheard us, and thought it prudent to break up our sitting, though we had only had a short twelve minutes' rest.

Eleanor not only set the fashion of a more reasonable style of chat in our brief holiday hours, but she was apt to make lessons the subject of discussions, which were at first resented by the other girls.

"I can't think," she began one day (it was a favourite way with

her of opening a discussion)—“I can’t think what makes Mr. Henley always make us put the shadows in in cobalt. Some shadows are light blue certainly, I think, especially on these white roads, but I don’t think they are always; not in Yorkshire, at any rate. However, as far as that goes, he paints his things all in the same colours, whatever they’re meant for, the Bay of Naples; or the coast of Northumberland. By-the-by, I know that I’ve heard that the shadows on the snow in Canada are really blue—bright blue.”

“You’re blue, deep blue,” said Emma. “How you can talk shop out of lesson hours, Eleanor, I can’t conceive. You began on grammar the other day, by way of enlivening our ten minutes’ rest.”

“I’m very sorry,” said Eleanor; “I’m fond of drawing, you know.”

“Oh, do let her talk, Emma!” cried Pæony. “I do so like to hear her. Why are the shadows on the snow, blue, Eleanor?”

“I can’t think,” said Eleanor, “unless it has something to do with reflection from the sky.”

Eleanor was not always discreet enough to keep her opinion of Mr. Henley’s style to herself and us. She was a very clever girl, and like other very young people, her cleverness was apt to be aggressive, scorned compromises, and was not always sufficiently respectful towards the powers that be.

Her taste for drawing was known, and Madame taunted her one day with having a reputation for talent in this line, when her watercolour copies were not so effective as Lucy’s; simply, I believe, with the wish to stimulate her to excel. I am sure Madame much preferred Eleanor to Lucy, as a matter of liking.

“Behold, Mademoiselle!” said she, holding up one of Lucy’s latest copies, just glorified with a wide aureole of white cardboard “mounting.” “What do you think of this?”

“It is very like Mr. Henley’s,” said Eleanor, warmly. “Lucy has taken great pains, I’m sure. It’s quite as good as the copy, I think.”

“But what do you think of it?” said Madame, impatiently; she was too quickwitted to be easily “put off.” “Is it not beautiful?”

“It is very smart, very gay,” said Eleanor, who began to lose her temper. “All Mr. Henley’s sketches are gay. The thatch on the house reminds me of the ‘ends’ of Berlin wool that are kept, after a big piece of work, for kettle-holders. The yellow tree and the blue tree are very pretty: there always is a yellow tree and a blue tree in

Mr. Henley's sketches. I don't know what kind of trees they are. I never do. The trunks are pink, but that doesn't help one, for the markings on them are always the same."

Eleanor's French was quite good enough to give this speech its full weight, as Madame's kindling eyes testified. She flung the drawing from her, and was bursting forth into reply, when, by good luck, Miss Mulberry called for her so impatiently, that she was obliged to leave the room.

I had been repeating a lesson to Miss Ellen Mulberry, who lay on a couch near the window, but we had both paused involuntarily to listen to Eleanor and Madame.

Miss Ellen was very good. She was also very gentle, and timid to nervousness. But from her couch she saw a good deal of the daily life of the school, and often understood matters better than those who were in the thick of it, I think.

When Madame had left the room, she called Eleanor to her, and in an almost trembling voice said,

"My dear, do you think you are quite right to speak so to Madame about that drawing?"

"I am very sorry, Miss Ellen," said Eleanor, "but it's what I think, and she asked me what I thought."

"You are very clever, my dear," said Miss Ellen, "and no one knows better than yourself that there are more ways than one of expressing one's opinion."

"Indeed," Eleanor broke in, "I don't want to be rude. I'm sorry I did speak so pertly. But, oh, Miss Ellen, I wish you could see the trees my mother draws! How can I say I like those things of Mr. Henley's? Like green seaweeds on the end of a pink hay-fork! And we've lots of old etchings at home, with such trees in them! Like—well, like nothing but real trees and photographs."

Miss Ellen took Eleanor's hand and drew her towards her.

"My dear," said she, "you have plenty of sense; and have evidently used it to appreciate what your dear mother has shown and taught to you. Use it now, my dear, to ask yourself if it is reasonable to expect that men who could draw like the old masters would teach in ordinary girls' schools, or, if they would, that schoolmistresses could afford to pay them properly without a much greater charge to the parents of pupils than they would be willing to bear. You have had

great advantages at home, and have learnt enough to make you able to say very smart things, but fault-find is an easy trade, my dear, and it would be wiser as well as kinder to see what good you can get from poor Mr. Henley's lessons, as to the use of the brush and colours, instead of neglecting your drawing because you don't like his style, which, after all, you needn't copy when you sketch from nature yourself. I will tell you, dear child, that my sister and I have talked this matter over before. Clever young people are apt to think that their stupid elders have never perceived what their brilliant young wits can put straight with half a dozen words. But I used to draw a little myself," continued Miss Ellen, very modestly, "and I have never liked Mr. Henley's style. But he is such a very good old man, and so poor, that my sister has shrunk from changing. Still, of course our pupils are the first consideration, and we should have had another master if a much better one could have been got. But Mr. Markham, who is the only other one 'within reach, is not so painstaking and patient with his pupils as Mr. Henley; and though his style is rather better, it is not so very superior as to lead us, on the whole, to turn poor Mr. Henley away for him. As to Madame," said Miss Ellen, in conclusion, "she was quite right, my dear, to contrast your negligence with Lucy's industry, and your smart speech was not in good taste towards her, because you know that she knows nothing of drawing, and could not dispute the point with you. There she comes," added Miss Ellen rather nervously. She was afraid of Madame.

"I'll go and beg her pardon, dear Miss Ellen," said Eleanor, penitently, and rushing out of the room, she met Madame in the passage, and we heard her pouring forth a torrent of apology and self-accusation in a style peculiar to herself. If in her youth and cleverness she was at times a little sharp-tongued and self-opinionated, the vehemence of her self-reproaches when she saw herself in fault was always a joke with those who knew her.

"Eleanor's confessions are only to be matched by her favourite Jeremy Taylor's," said Jack, one day.'

"She's just as bumptious next time, all the same," said Clement. He had been disputing with Eleanor, and the generous grace of meeting an apology half-way was no part of his character.

He had an arbitrary disposition, in which Eleanor to some extent shared. He controlled it to fairness in discussions with men, but with

men only. With Eleanor, who persisted in thinking for herself, and was not slow to express her thoughts, he had many hot disputes, in which he often seemed unable to be fair, and did not always trouble himself to be reasonable.

By his own account he "detested girls with opinions." Abroad he was politely contemptuous of feminine ideas; at home he was apt to be rudely so.

But this was only one, and a later development of many-sided Clement.

And the subject is a digression, and has no business here.

(To be continued.)

THE SNAKE CHARMERS OF INDIA.

(Communicated by a Friend in India.)



YOU have, doubtless, often heard of the snake charmers of India, religious mendicants, who have, or pretend to have (of which you shall judge for yourself), the power of charming snakes, venomous and harmless, from their lurking places in the grass, hedges, or walls, and bringing them out into broad daylight, handling them fearlessly, and suffering no ill effects from their bite.

I will now relate to you what actually occurred to myself two days ago. I am stationed at B——, where I hold a staff appointment. I went the day before yesterday to the general officer commanding the district on duty. He had recently married, and, having heard of some snake charmers being in the vicinity, mentioned it to his young wife, who, being all eagerness to see them, they were sent for. When I arrived at the general's house that morning I found the men there. Mrs. ——— exclaimed, "Oh, Major H——, do come here, these men are most wonderful; they have caught eight or ten snakes in our garden, one a large Cobra, which has bitten the man dreadfully; his arm is streaming with blood. Do watch them and see if you can find out any trick." I asked the men if they could find any more; they replied that if there were any in the place they would produce them. I took one man with me towards some high grass, having had him searched before starting to see that he had no snake concealed about him.

He commenced blowing a few low notes upon his pipe as soon as we started off, and did not cease for a moment. He stepped bare-legged cautiously into the grass, looking keenly in all directions. I followed as closely as possible to him, watching every movement. At last he stopped suddenly and pointed to the right, reached forward, and, with a quick movement, seized and brought out wriggling in his hand a snake about four feet long, which immediately seized him by the arm below the elbow, and was disengaged with difficulty, the fangs having penetrated deep into the flesh. The snake was of a venomous kind. We carried it out into the gravel pathway, and put it into a basket, and I took the man to another part of the ground; here we caught a Cobra di capello about five feet long, and then another, all in a similar way to the first, the man darting his long bony bare arm into the grass or hedge, and pulling out a snake and handful of herbage torn up by the roots.

He had then caught over a dozen. Having finished my business with the general, I asked him if the men had known beforehand that they were to come to a certain house. He replied that they had been told the day before to come to his house at a certain hour. I said, "Then the snakes are tame and innocuous, and they have been placed about the premises, ready to hand." But the General was certain that this was not the case. "The beasts," he said, "are too wild and savage to have ever been in a basket before; they rush out directly the lid is opened, biting at everything which comes in their way;" which certainly was the case; they appeared to make every effort to escape. One large Cobra, in fact the largest I have ever seen perhaps, seven feet long, kept up a continued hissing, or *blowing* I think better describes the noise, and struck right and left at everything within reach, a hideous, savage, untamable brute, and deadly.

I addressed the elder of the men, a withered, dried-up, grey old Fakir.

"Oh, friend, you put those snakes into this garden last night?"

"The Sahib knows."

"Can you catch them at my house?"

"If God pleases."

"Come to my house and try."

"Where does the Sahib live?"

"Come and see."

I took the men with me to my house, half a mile off, and never let them out of my sight, so there was no opportunity of hiding any snakes in the grounds. I set them down on an open space on the gravel, and immediately took one of them with me to try the new hunting ground. The man played on his instrument and looked sharply about him as usual, I keeping close to him. I guided him towards a clump of trees, and, when there, stopped him, and, to his surprise, told him to strip off every article of clothing, which he did, and stood *in puris naturalibus*. I had everything well shaken out and examined; even his long plaited hair uncoiled had not a sign of a snake. We then went on, and in two minutes he brought out a huge serpent from behind my cucumbers, and was again bitten. This animal had lost the tip of its tail: the Fakir and two of my servants remarked that it had already bitten some one, for when a snake does so it always loses the tip of its tail; a native notion which I had never heard of before. We caught two Cobras after this and two others, all out of my garden, and I dare say he would have produced as many more had we given him the opportunity.

I do not agree with General —, and I believe the whole thing to be an imposition, but, if so, it certainly is the cleverest imposition ever witnessed.

These men will never allow you to destroy the snakes, saying that if they killed one they would lose all power over others. Each time a man was bitten he placed a little black stone on the wound, and drew circles above and below and round his arm with what appear to be pieces of some kind of wood. The stone is said to be found in the Cobra's head, and the pieces of wood "medicine," which they only know of. I obtained specimens of both (herewith sent).

A lady doubted the fact of a Cobra, recently caught by this man, and which had bitten him, having the poison fangs still in his jaw. The man opened the reptile's mouth, and with a twig of wood lifted up the fangs from the jaw, broke them off with his fingers, and presented them to her on a leaf.

W. H.



OLD-FASHIONED FAIRY TALES.

KNAVE AND FOOL.



FOOL and a Knave once set up house together : which shows what a fool the Fool was.

The Knave was delighted with the agreement ; and the Fool thought himself most fortunate to have met with a companion who would supply his lack of mother-wit.

As neither of them liked work, the Knave proposed that they should live upon their joint savings as long as these should last ; and, to avoid disputes, that they should use the Fool's share till it came to an end, and then begin upon the Knave's stocking.

So, for a short time, they lived in great comfort at the Fool's expense, and were very good company ; for easy times make easy tempers.

Just when the store was exhausted, the Knave came running to the Fool with an empty bag and a wry face, crying, "Dear friend, what shall we do ? This bag, which I had safely buried under a gooseberry-bush, has been taken up by some thief, and all my money stolen. My savings were twice as large as yours ; but now that they are gone, and I can no longer perform my share of the bargain, I fear our partnership must be dissolved."

"Not so, dear friend," said the Fool, who was very good-natured ; "we have shared good luck together, and now we will share poverty. But as nothing is left, I fear we must seek work."

"You speak very wisely," said the Knave. "And what, for instance, can you do ?"

"Very little," said the Fool ; "but that little I do well."

"So do I," said the Knave. "Now can you plough, or sow, or feed cattle, or plant crops ?"

"Farming is not my business," said the Fool.

"Nor mine," said the Knave ; "but no doubt you are a handicraftsman. Are you clever at carpentry, mason's work, tailoring, or shoemaking ?"

"I do not doubt that I should have been had I learned the trades," said the Fool, "but I never was bound apprentice."

"It is the same with myself," said the Knave ; "but you may have finer talents. Can you paint, or play the fiddle ?"

"I never tried," said the Fool; "so I don't know."

"Just my case," said the Knave. "And now, since we can't find work, I propose that we travel till work finds us."

The two comrades accordingly set forth, and they went on and on, till they came to the foot of a hill, where a merchantman was standing by his wagon, which had broken down.

"You seem two strong men," said he, as they advanced; "if you will carry this chest of valuables up to the top of the hill, and down to the bottom on the other side, where there is an inn, I will give you two gold pieces for your trouble."

The Knave and the Fool consented to this, saying, "Work has found us at last;" and they lifted the box on to their shoulders.

"Turn, and turn about," said the Knave; "but the best turn between friends is a good turn; so I will lead the way up-hill, which is the hardest kind of travelling, and you shall go first down-hill, the easy half of our journey."

The Fool thought this proposal a very generous one, and, not knowing that the lower end of their burden was the heavy one, he carried it all the way. When they got to the inn, the merchant gave each of them a gold piece, and, as the accommodation was good, they remained where they were till their money was spent. After this, they lived there awhile on credit; and when that was exhausted, they rose one morning whilst the landlord was still in bed, and pursued their journey, leaving old scores behind them.

They had been a long time without work or food, when they came up to a man who sat by the roadside breaking stones, with a quart of porridge and a spoon in a tin pot beside him.

"You look hungry, friends," said he, "and I, for my part, want to get away. If you will break up this heap, you shall have the porridge for supper. But when you have eaten it, put the pot and spoon under the hedge, that I may find them when I return."

"If we eat first, we shall have strength for our work," said the Knave; "and as there is only one spoon, we must eat by turns. But fairly divide, friendly abide. As you went first the latter part of our journey, I will begin on this occasion. When I stop, you fall to, and eat as many spoonfuls as I ate. Then I will follow you in like fashion, and so on till the pot is empty."

"Nothing could be fairer," said the Fool; and the Knave began to

eat, and went on till he had eaten a third of the porridge. The Fool, who had counted every spoonful, now took his turn, and ate exactly as much as his comrade. The Knave then began again, and was exact to a mouthful; but it emptied the pot. Thus the Knave had twice as much as the Fool, who could not see where he had been cheated.

They then set to work.

"As there is only one hammer," said the Knave, "we must work, as we supped, by turns; and as I began last time, you shall begin this. After you have worked awhile, I will take the hammer from you, and do as much myself whilst you rest. Then you shall take it up again, and so on till the heap is finished."

"It is not every one who is as just as you," said the Fool; and taking up the hammer, he set to work with a will.

The Knave took care to let him go on till he had broken a third of the stones, and then he did as good a share himself; after which the Fool began again, and finished the heap.

By this means the Fool did twice as much work as the Knave, and yet he could not complain.

As they moved on again, the Fool perceived that the Knave was taking the can and the spoon with him.

"I am sorry to see you do that, friend," said he.

"It's a very small theft," said the Knave. "The can cannot have cost more than sixpence, when new."

"That was not what I meant," said the Fool, "so much as that I fear the owner will find it out."

"He will only think the things have been stolen by some vagrant," said the Knave—"which, indeed, they would be if we left them. But as you seem to have a tender conscience, I will keep them myself."

After a while they met with a farmer, who offered to give them supper and a night's lodging, if they would scare the birds from a field of corn for him till sunset.

"I will go into the outlying fields," said the Knave, "and as I see the birds coming, I will turn them back. You, dear friend, remain in the corn, and scare away the few that may escape me."

But whilst the Fool clapped and shouted till he was tired, the Knave went to the other side of the hedge, and lay down for a nap.

As they sat together at supper, the Fool said, "Dear friend, this is laborious work. I propose that we ask the farmer to let us tend sheep, instead. That is a very different affair. One lies on the hill-side all day. The birds do not steal sheep; and all this shouting and clapping is saved."

The Knave very willingly agreed, and next morning the two friends drove a flock of sheep on to the downs. The sheep at once began to nibble, the dog sat with his tongue out, panting, and the Knave and Fool lay down on their backs, and covered their faces with their hats to shield them from the sun.

Thus they lay till evening, when, the sun being down, they uncovered their faces, and found that the sheep had all strayed away, and the dog after them.

"The only plan for us is to go separate ways in search of the flock," said the Knave; "only let us agree to meet here again." They accordingly started in opposite directions; but when the Fool was fairly off, the Knave returned to his place, and lay down again.

By-and-by the dog brought the sheep back; so that, when the Fool returned, the Knave got the credit of having found them; for the dog scorned to explain his part in the matter.

As they sat together again at supper, the Fool said, "The work is not so easy as I thought. Could we not find a better trade yet?"

"Can you beg?" said the Knave. "A beggar's trade is both easy and profitable. Nothing is required but walking and talking. Then one walks at his own pace, for there is no hurry, and no master, and the same tale does for every door. And, that all may be fair and equal, you shall beg at the front door, whilst I ask an alms at the back."

To this the Fool gladly agreed; and as he was as lean as a hunted cat, charitable people gave him a penny or two from time to time. Meanwhile, the Knave went round to the back yard, where he picked up a fowl, or turkey, or anything that he could lay his hands upon.

When he returned to the Fool, he would say, "See what has been given to me, whilst you have only got a few pence."

At last this made the Fool discontented, and he said, "I should like now to exchange with you. I will go to the back doors, and you to the front."

The Knave consented, and at the next house the Fool went to the

back door; but the mistress of the farm only rated him, and sent him away. Meanwhile, the Knave, from the front, had watched her leave the parlour, and, slipping in through the window, he took a ham and a couple of new loaves from the table, and so made off.

When the friends met, the Fool was crestfallen at his ill luck, and the Knave complained that all the burden of their support fell upon him. "See," said he, "what they give me, where you get only a mouthful of abuse!" And he dined heartily on what he had stolen; but the Fool only had bits of the bread-crust, and the parings of the ham.

At the next place the Fool went to the front door as before, and the Knave secured a fat goose and some plums in the back yard, which he popped under his cloak. The Fool came away with empty hands, and the Knave scolded him, saying, "Do you suppose that I mean to share this fat goose with a lazy beggar like you? Go on, and find for yourself." With which he sat down and began to eat the plums, whilst the Fool walked on alone.

After a while, however, the Knave saw a stir in the direction of the farm they had left, and he quickly perceived that the loss of the goose was known, and that the farmer and his men were in pursuit of the thief. So, hastily picking up the goose, he overtook the Fool, and pressed it into his arms, saying, "Dear friend, pardon a passing ill humour, of which I sincerely repent. Are we not partners in good luck and ill? I was wrong, dear friend; and, in token of my penitence, the goose shall be yours alone. And here are a few plums with which you may refresh yourself by the wayside. As for me, I will hasten on to the next farm, and see if I can beg a bottle of liquor to wash down the dinner, and drink to our good-fellowship." And before the Fool could thank him, the Knave was off like the wind.

By-and-by the farmer and his men came up, and found the Fool eating the plums, with the goose on the grass beside him.

They hurried him off to the justice, where his own story met with no credit. The woman of the next farm came up also, and recognised him for the man who had begged at her door the day she lost a ham and two new loaves. In vain he said that these things also had been given to his friend. The friend never appeared; and the poor Fool was whipped and put in the stocks.

Towards evening the Knave hurried up to the village green, where his friend sat doing penance for the theft.

"My dear friend," said he, "what do I see? Is such cruelty possible? But I hear that the justice is not above a bribe, and we must at any cost obtain your release. I am going at once to pawn my own boots and cloak, and everything about me that I can spare, and if you have anything to add, this is no time to hesitate."



The poor Fool begged his friend to draw off his boots, and to take his hat and coat as well, and to make all speed on his charitable errand.

The Knave took all that he could get, and, leaving his friend sitting in the stocks in his shirt-sleeves, he disappeared as swiftly as one could wish a man to carry a reprieve.

For those good folks to whom everything must be explained in full, it may be added that the Knave did not come back, and that he kept the clothes.

It was very hard on the Fool ; but what can one expect if he keeps company with a Knave ?

THE BIRDS.



L AID me down upon the grass,
And watched the soft cloud-shadows pass,
And listened to the river's voice
And all the hum of insect life
With which the summer noon is rife.
And yet my heart could not rejoice.

The elm trees cast a tender shade
Through which the golden sunbeams strayed ;
The river as it flowed along
In many a clear brown tiny wave,
Kissing the stones it could not lave,
Still failed to cheer me with its song.

For I was sad and sick at heart
To think how little was my part ;
And earnestly I longed to find
Some noble task, some high emprise
That fills the soul and satisfies
The vacant powers of heart and mind.

At length I, half unheeding, heard
The chirrup of a little bird
Upon an elm bough seated ;
And gazing idly all around,
Again I heard the merry sound
From mossy nest repeated.

Then from their soft and downy home
I watched the little nestlings come,
And saw the parents try,
With loving and unwearied care
And tenderness beyond compare,
To teach their little ones to fly.

How useless seemed their toil at first!
What feeble efforts oft rehearsed!
Yet as I watched them longer,
The little birds less awkward grew,
And twittered gaily, for they knew
Their little wings were stronger.

Until at length one sunny day
The little learners flew away;
And as they circled higher
A lesson to my mind they brought
That quenched with one bright happy thought
My vain ambition's fire.

"Bethink thee," thus they seemed to say,
"How long we waited for this day—
How we have watched and striven;
For is it not by efforts small
That we have learned to fly at all
Towards the bright blue Heaven?"

Thanks, little birds! I too will wait,
Nor idly sigh for something great
And high, to need my doing;
Small tasks are round me where I stand,
Small duties lying close at hand,
That I might be pursuing.

Perchance when all these little things
Have strengthened my now feeble wings,
And I like you have striven,
To higher duties I may range,
And these poor pinions then exchange
For angel-wings in Heaven.



WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY—*continued.*

THE CASCINE AT PISA.



E spent a very pleasant fortnight at Pisa, a fine old town about an hour's railway journey from Leghorn. Charlie would have liked the museum there, where there is the best collection of stuffed animals and birds I ever saw.

CHARLIE. I like the Zoo—zoo—ollical Gardens. The beasts and birds are alive there.

MYSELF. So do I; but I think you would have liked the dead ones at Pisa, too, for they were so well stuffed they looked as if they were alive. For instance, you would have liked to see a group of foxes with dead chickens. There was the old mother fox, and her pretty little, soft cubs, and the old thief of a father with a hen in his mouth, while the eight poor, yellow chicks had been killed, and lay about with their down ruffled and their beaks open. I must say the old fox was a splendid fellow, and worth looking at, though he *had* just killed the poor hen while defending her little ones.

CHARLIE. I should have liked that. What else was there?

MYSELF. There were some wolves from the Maremma, a wild, marshy part of the country, and a noble sheep-dog, defending a lamb. The dog had got the lamb safe from the wolf's mouth, and the savage creature was turning his fury upon the faithful guardian. The group was full of life, and, as I stood looking at it, I quite longed to kill the wolf, caress the dog, and cuddle the poor, frightened lamb.

CHARLIE. Was there anything else I should like to hear about?

MYSELF. Oh yes, certainly. There were some Egyptian rats—such odd-looking things, with frightened, staring eyes, and very long legs, more like tiny kangaroos than rats. And there was an Argus pheasant, and an albatross.

CHARLIE. Is an albatross a beast? (A laugh from the two girls, which was checked as they remembered the rules.)

MYSELF. No, Charlie, it is a very large, white sea bird. Kitty, if you remind me, I will read you a poem after tea about the albatross. It is called the "Ancient Mariner." Do you know what the Argus pheasant is like?

KITTY (slightly disdainful). Oh dear, yes. I have seen it in the Zoological Gardens. It has eyes all over it.

MYSELF. I don't think you used *your* eyes to much advantage, my dear.

KITTY (affronted). But it had, Miss Hay; and I have read about it, too. Now, Blanche—

MYSELF. How well it must see things with so many eyes!

KITTY. Oh, Miss Hay, it doesn't see with them. They are not real eyes.

MYSELF. But you said so. You said it had eyes all over it.

KITTY. But of course I meant that they were *like* eyes; only not real ones, you know.

MYSELF. To be sure: I only wanted you to see that it is not quite the same thing to *say* one thing and *mean* another. But we must get away from the museum, or we shall not have time to go to the Cascine, as it is called, or the dairy farm outside Pisa, where the king has a hunting lodge, and which every one ought to see because of the camels.

ALL. Camels!

MYSELF. Yes; but I will tell you from the beginning. We took a carriage in the first place, for it is three miles from Pisa, and the day was hot, and we drove along a perfectly straight road all the way. It was bordered by a double row of trees, and formed an avenue. At the end of the avenue, where the road at last turns to the right, is the king's house and the farm buildings. The former was not much better than a large English farm-house, and not a bit like a royal abode. The king was there, so the Italian flag was hoisted on the roof. We drove round it, and leaving it behind us, came to a thick forest of stone pines.

BLANCHE. I never heard of a stone pine.

MYSELF. They are a flat-topped pine peculiar to warm climates, and very handsome. See, here is a sketch I made of one. Look at its fine red stem, and the beautiful, dark-green, velvety head, spreading out mushroom-shaped, and quite flat at the top.

BLANCHE. It looks like an umbrella.

MYSELF. Our driver picked up some of the cones for us, that we might admire their size and fine spicy smell. They are used for firing, and a delicious blaze they make.

BLANCHE. Oh, Miss Hay, will you teach me to draw like that?

CHARLIE. Oh, bother, Blanche! Do go on to the camels, Miss Hay.

"I wonder," said I, coolly, "that Blanche did not say, 'Oh, bother!' when you asked so many questions about the museum, Charlie."

CHARLIE. But the pines are *so* stupid.

MYSELF. I see. Everything that *you* think stupid we are to pass over and say nothing about. Is that to be the rule? ;

BLANCHE. Miss Spencer used to say very often that Charlie was selfish; and that is being selfish, is it not?

"I see I must make another rule," said I, not wishing to lecture just then. "Not only must no question be laughed at, but no one must say, 'Oh, bother!' even if they think the question ever so stupid. And now I will go on, and we will talk about the drawing afterwards."

We drove on along a broad, sandy road, right through the pine forest, where the king has his hunting grounds. It is stocked with deer, wild boar, and all kinds of smaller animals. We saw some trees which had had their barks quite rubbed off by the wild boars, who had sharpened their tusks on them. Presently we came to a building which looked like a huge barn, with stacks all round it, and a farm-yard. Here we got out; and the first thing we saw was a camel kneeling down on the ground, while a man took off his back the large wooden frame or cradle which held a load of the stone pine cones. We went into the building, and there were some thirty camels in a double row of stalls, contentedly munching their suppers of hay after the day's work.

KITTY. But why are they there, and what do they do? I thought camels only lived in Africa.

MYSELF. These camels were first sent for, I believe, by one of the grand dukes of Tuscany. It was a fancy of his to have them to do the work of the farm instead of horses or oxen, and the climate seems to suit them very well. They can carry twice the load of horses, and have a great deal of endurance.

CHARLIE. I wish papa would have some camels for the farm. I shall ask him.

MYSELF. They would not do in England, Charlie; it would be too damp for them. Remember, they are natives of very dry, hot countries.

BLANCHE. You said they belonged to the grand duke, Miss Hay. Why has the king got them now?

MYSELF. Because, since Italy has been made a kingdom, there is no longer a grand duke of Tuscany, and all his lands and possessions have become the king's—the camels as well as everything else. Two especially handsome camels were pointed out to us as having been lately sent to the king as a present from the viceroy of Egypt. One of them was only five years old, and had not yet done any work. The

oldest camel in the stable was twenty. You can fancy how curious it must be to meet a long string of camels under the great pine-trees, each with his load of wood, or hay, or cones. Had we gone a little earlier we might have seen this, but we were a little too late, and they were just stabled for the night.

KITTY. Did you see anything besides the camels?

MYSELF. No; there are stables near with a fine stud of the king's horses, many English ones among them, and a kennel of his sporting dogs; but we had not time to visit them. As we drove home, we passed strings of women, with short petticoats and bare legs and feet, carrying on their backs and heads immense bundles of faggots which they had picked up in the forest. They are allowed to go and gather as much wood as they can from these royal woods, for two or three months (I forget which) every spring. This must be a great boon to these women, who looked sadly poor. They had come all the way from Pisa in the morning, and were going back again with loads which an Englishwoman would have some difficulty in lifting, much more in carrying for four miles or more under a hot sun.

FLORENCE, AND THE PONTE VECCHIO.

"I HAVE got a drawing of Florence to show you this evening," said I as I opened my sketch-book; "it is taken from a hill just outside the city, called 'Bello Sguardo,' or 'Beautiful View,' and it may perhaps give you some little idea of the place before we talk about it." The girls both looked eagerly at my imperfect representation of that most lovely of all lovely views.

KITTY. Let me see, that river is the—the—

"Arno," put in Blanche.

Somehow I was always sorry when Blanche, with her little air of self-satisfaction, was right.

MYSELF. Yes, you just see the line of the river among the houses, and then it winds away through that great plain.

BLANCHE. What are those trailing green things among the trees?

MYSELF. Those are the vines. This drawing is too small to show them well, but it is beautiful to see their long branches trained from tree to tree in festoons for miles, even as I saw them, when they were only in leaf. When the purple and white grapes hang from them in great clusters they must be still more lovely.

KITTY. That great dome looks like St. Peter's, Miss Hay; but St. Peter's is in Rome, I know.

MYSELF. It belongs to the cathedral, Kitty, and is really larger than the great dome of St. Peter's, which was built afterwards in imitation of it. The tall, slender tower close by is the Campanile, or bell-tower, called usually Giotto's Tower, from the name of the architect, and is entirely cased in white and coloured marbles of different patterns. It is exquisitely beautiful.

ALL. A tower made of marble!

MYSELF. Not exactly. It is built of bricks, and the slabs of marble are laid over it.

CHARLIE. What is the use of a bell-tower? Isn't there a belfry in the church?

MYSELF. No. In Italy the cathedral is simply the body of the building, as it were; then there is the bell-tower, which stands separate, like the one at Chichester in Sussex; and the baptistery also, nearly as large as a church in itself, where the font is, and baptisms are performed; so the cathedral really consists of three buildings.

KITTY. How white all the houses look, and how very blue the sky is!

MYSELF. Yes, that is because marble is as much used for building as stone with us and the atmosphere is so clear. There is another reason too—the absence of coal smoke. If I were to try and draw London, for instance, from a height, I should hardly see anything for the smoky mist which always hangs over it. In Florence they burn wood when they have fires at all, and so everything looks clean and bright.

BLANCHE. But Florence is not so large as London, is it?

MYSELF. No, but it is nevertheless a large city, and was the capital of Italy when I was there.

BLANCHE. Capital! I thought Rome was the capital of Italy.

MYSELF. And so it is now, but it was not so then. When Italy was first made a united kingdom Florence was made the capital. The reason being that the Papal States, in which Rome is situated, were ruled over by the Pope, and you know, do you not, that he claims to be higher than any earthly king. Well, his dominions did not make part of the kingdom of Italy at first, and would only acknowledge the Pope. Now, however, they have submitted, and Victor Emmanuel reigns over the whole of Italy, with Rome for his capital.

CHARLIE. What has become of the poor Pope?

MYSELF. He lives in Rome, and I should think he must be happier than he was when there were so many quarrels about him, Charlie. He is still head of the Roman Catholic Church, and is what is called a *spiritual* sovereign, though no longer a *temporal* one.

KITTY. Florence doesn't look a bit like any English town, there are so many trees everywhere.

MYSELF. Well, no ; I wish there were more English towns like it in this respect. But you would be disappointed with it at first, I think ; at least, I was, though afterwards I grew to love it and admire it more and more every day. Would you like to come with me just for a short walk by the river, to look at one of the bridges ? We shall not have time for more this evening.

CHARLIE. Oh, yes ! I like it when you say "Come with me," because then, if I shut my eyes, it seems as if I were really going for a walk, you know.

MYSELF. I am so glad you think so, Charlie ; that is just what I want you to feel. Well, in the first place, it is very sunny ; and as the sun here is intensely hot, even in April, we must take sunshades, or, better still, umbrellas.

CHARLIE. Walk with an umbrella when it is fine—how funny ! And it is only girls who mind the sun.

MYSELF. Boys and men have to mind it in Florence when they go out in the heat of the day. They wind blue or white veils round their hats to keep their heads cool, and usually have an umbrella as well. We will walk along from the East Suspension Bridge to the Ponte Vecchio, or Old Bridge, the river to our right, and houses and shops to our left hand ; but we must not stop to look at these now, or we shall not have time to see the Ponte Vecchio, which is most curious, and unlike anything you have ever seen. It has shops on each side of it, and over the shops a long covered gallery, about which I will tell you another time. The shops are all jewellers' shops, full of coral, and mosaics, and watches. They line the bridge on each side, and are only interrupted in the middle, where there is an open space on each side, with three arches, through which you can look out at the river and houses beyond. And very beautiful it is to look through these arches, which are like frames to a picture.

BLANCHE. Are the shops very pretty, Miss Hay ?

MYSELF. Not the shops themselves, exactly, only the things in them. Indeed, they are hardly shops at all, according to our ideas of plate-

glass windows and a great show. The things are placed for the most part under low, sloping glass cases, such as you may have seen at country fairs; these are kept locked, and if you want to know the price of anything, out comes the proprietor from his little den behind, unlocks the case, and answers your question after a fashion of his own; that is to say, he names about double, or sometimes even three times the price he means to take.

KITTY, *indignantly*. What a cheat!

MYSELF. He does not mean to be one, it is the regular way of Italian shop-keepers. He expects you to protest, to exclaim, to name a lower sum; he will sometimes even let you go out of the shop (for this is done in the grand new shops as well as at the counters of the Ponte Vecchio), and then with a smile and a shrug of his shoulders he ends by letting you have the article you have chosen at its fair and just value.

BLANCHE. Well, it sounds a very stupid custom, and must take up a great deal of time.

MYSELF. So it does, and we must make haste and get away from these tempting things, which are always surrounded by a crowd of foreigners. Take care you are not run over as you come off the bridge, for the street is very narrow just here, and there is much traffic, and so little room for foot-passengers that I often wondered to hear of so few accidents.

KITTY. The bell hasn't rung, Miss Hay, and you said there were four bridges.

MYSELF. So there are, but none so interesting or curious as this one. They are handsome, but more like common bridges. The Ponte Vecchio is very old.

CHARLIE. How old?

MYSELF. You are very precise, Charlie. I must consider. Let me see: I think it must be about five hundred years old, and from its earliest days the jewellers have lived there.

BLANCHE. Oh, do tell us about the other shops; I should so like to hear.

MYSELF. No, Blanche, not now. Another time I will tell you about the mosaics, for which Florence is famous. Now it is quite time to put away the chairs. There is the bell; run away, dears.

(*To be continued.*)

A STRANGE PET.

By the Author of "Liza's Dream," &c.



HEN I was a little girl, and children's books were less plentiful than they are now, I was very fond of creeping up into an attic, which was used as a lumber-room, and there turning over a certain large box of dusty old books. Probably they had been bought at a sale at one time or other, and then not found worthy of admittance to the study downstairs; and certainly they were for the most part dry enough. They consisted chiefly of odd volumes of an old Cyclopædia; but, such as they were, I contrived to pick up a good deal of information from them, and seldom failed to have recourse to my attic when I encountered anything which puzzled me in the school-room reading. One day after lessons I rushed up the crooked stairs with greater eagerness than usual, for I had been learning some verses, which most children know, about the chameleon, and I was anxious to find out whether my books had anything to say on the subject. It was the first time I had heard of the animal, and I had been romancing to myself about it all the morning, wondering whether there really were such a creature; how it managed to live on air and change colour in so marvellous a fashion; and finally, whether, after all, the verses I had been reading were anything more than a fable such as the fox and the grapes. Of course I might have asked my father or mother, and thereby spared myself a good deal of trouble; but I had rather a fancy for solving my difficulties for myself, whenever it was possible, and, moreover, I did not like to run the risk of having my fancies laughed at.

I soon found that the volume I wanted was lying snugly at the bottom of the box, and having extracted it with some difficulty and a great deal of dust, I proceeded to look out "Chameleon." There was the word, sure enough, but no explanation, only "See *Lacerta*," so I had to dive again and bring out the L. volume, which, luckily for my peace of mind, chanced to be at hand.

Lacerta, I found, meant "a lizard," and I knew what this was, for I had sometimes seen one dart along the wall, or lie basking in the sun; but I was not at all prepared to find that *crocodiles* belonged to the

lizard family. However, there they were; and then followed alligators, and other animals whose names I did not recognise; and at last, after hunting through several pages, I came to what I wanted. So at least I thought, at first sight; but a second glance showed me that the account was given in such long and difficult words that I should not be able to make much out of it. However, as I did not like to own myself defeated, I read on straight through them all, feeling much puzzled as to what the "Isabella colour" might be, which, as my book said, was the hue of the spots on the chameleon's skin. Moreover, I was greatly scandalised by the last paragraph, which ran thus: "Mr. Hasselquist is of opinion, that the change of colour in the chameleon is owing to its being exceedingly subject to the jaundice, which particularly happens either when it is exposed to the sun, or when it is made angry. The mixture of the bile with its blood is then very perceptible, and, as the skin is transparent, makes it spotted with green and yellow. *He never saw it coloured with red, blue, or purple; and does not believe it ever assumes these colours.*"

"I wonder whether he ever read the verses," mused I to myself; "I think they might have done him good:

"When next you talk of what you view,
Think others see as well as you."

"Well, any way, I am glad it does not say 'fabulous animal,' as it does to the centaurs, and gryphons, and chimæras, and other interesting creatures that used to live in the world. There is such a thing as a chameleon, and I dare say it does change all manner of colours, in spite of Mr. Hasselquist, for here's Shakspeare:

"I can add colours to the chameleon."

"And Dryden:

"The thin chameleon, fed with air, receives
The colour of the thing to which he cleaves."

"And Prior:

"As the chameleon, which is known
To have no colours of his own,
But borrows from his neighbour's hue
His white or black, his green or blue."

Having triumphantly finished reading these quotations, I shut up

the old book rather less respectfully than usual, and went off into the garden to dream over my new fancy. It haunted me for some days, even weeks, and then, as such fancies do, gradually died away, and never recurred to me again till a few months ago when I chanced to be staying in the same house with a lady who was very fond of animals of all sorts, and actually had once had a chameleon as a pet. I had not thought of the creature once all these years, but the moment she mentioned it, I recalled the verses and the lumber-room, and the dusty old volume with its long words, as vividly as if I had thought of nothing else in the mean time; and, moreover, I was almost as eager as ever to discover the truth about the creature. This, however, proved in the long run to be no easy matter, though my friend was kind enough to answer all my questions most patiently. This was the account she gave: "My chameleon was brought to me by my brother Frank, after one of his voyages in the Mediterranean; and, when I moved aside the cover of the cage, not in the least knowing what to expect, I beheld a most impish-looking animal sitting on, or rather clinging to the perch. My first idea was that it resembled chiefly a young alligator, for it had a large mouth, full of tiny teeth, one look at which was enough to dispel for ever the idea of its being content to subsist only on air. It was about eleven inches long, from the end of its snout to the tip of its tail, which was twisted round the perch, and seemed to answer the purpose of a fifth leg.

"Each of its four feet had five claw-like fingers or toes, with which it grasped the perch, three being on one side and two on the other; but what chiefly attracted my attention were its eyes, which were large and prominent, about half an inch across, and almost entirely covered by a circular eyelid of skin, in the centre of which, just opposite the pupil, there was a tiny opening, no larger than the head of a common pin. Through this small opening, however, came a brilliant gleam of golden-brown, glittering like a precious stone in the sunshine. Presently, Frank brought him a fly, which he seized at once, darting out his tongue, which was nearly as long as his whole body, with such rapidity that we could scarcely see it. There was proof positive that he did not live on air; but it was scarcely pleasant to notice that, while he fixed one of his glittering eyes on the doomed fly, he was keeping a vigilant watch on me with the other, though I was standing behind him. I noticed then and afterwards that one eye was always

perfectly independent of the other, and that he could turn each separately, or both together, in any direction he pleased. He was harmless enough, poor thing, no doubt, but it was not altogether pleasant to see him squint so outrageously, that one never knew what he might be looking at.

"Frank told me that in his native place, Alexandria, he had lived on a particular sort of fly which attacks the figs; and that for this reason there had been some difficulty in getting him, for the people do not care to trouble themselves to catch chameleons until their figs are safely gathered. Very soon my new pet and I became good friends, and he would allow me to carry him about on a stick to hunt for flies. These he would never touch when dead, but, if I held him to the window, he would catch them as they buzzed on the pane, darting his long tongue out with the utmost rapidity and precision, and never failing to secure them by means of its sticky tip. After a fly hunt, the window looked as if it had been smeared over by a wet finger; for each dab of his tongue left its mark.

"I think I may fairly flatter myself that he entertained some sort of affection for me, inasmuch as he showed a considerable amount of confidence in my good will. When I carried him about on his stick, which he liked to be as smooth and polished as possible, like the fig-stems to which he had been accustomed, he did not think it necessary to watch me, but devoted all his attention and both his eyes to the pursuit of his game. If, on the other hand, a younger brother of mine took him out hunting, no matter how attractive the flies might be, he only spared one eye for them, keeping the other suspiciously turned over his shoulder. In the winter, he generally sat on the fire-irons; and I have seen him frequently sit squinting, clasping the poker with claws and tail, and deliberately spitting at this brother, who, for some cause or other, seemed to be his especial aversion.

"Whenever he was lost, as not infrequently happened, for he seldom kept in his cage, he might generally be found on my waist, clinging to the gathers of my dress."

"And did he really change colour except when he was ill in health or temper?" I inquired, with some anxiety, remembering the old *Cyclopædia*.

"To be sure he did," answered my friend, with much decision. "I have seen him take the colour of anything, no matter what, upon

which or near which he might happen to be. Thus, when among the fire-irons, he was the colour of steel; on my black dress, he was black—so black it was a difficult matter to find him; on a crimson-covered table, he would be crimson on one side and green on the other, if he chanced to be also near the green window curtain; and, finally, when asleep he was ash-coloured. One day I was summoned in haste into the garden, where a new wall was being built, for the men thought ‘Miss Helen’s *effet*’ had escaped. ‘Where is he?’ I asked, looking vainly about.

“‘There,’ answered the men, pointing to the wall, on which I could distinguish nothing but the usual marks and stains; and it was not till I had peered closely about for some instants that I discovered the truant, so exactly had he assumed the colour of the wall, as he on other occasions did that of the grass or gravel path. It seemed to me that his body was perfectly transparent, and therefore that his change of colour was less a matter of will than a natural and unavoidable consequence of this fact. Moreover, but for this faculty, he must have fallen an easy prey to such animals as live on small reptiles; for he had, so far as I saw, no other means of avoiding or defending himself from attack. Even his long tongue, with its sticky tip, would, I believe, have been quite powerless against anything more formidable than a fly; though I did once see him preparing to dart it at our little dog. My own idea is, that, as certain caterpillars closely resemble the twigs of the trees upon which they live—so closely, indeed, that one can almost see the lichen growing on them—so the chameleon’s transparent body in like manner acts as a protection against his natural enemies. He lived with me for some months; but, as the winter came on, I began to wonder what I should do for flies to feed him with, and wrote to the Zoological Gardens to ask advice. I was told to try meal worms, which I did with some success; but at last the poor thing refused them, and lived for a whole fortnight on one fly. At the end of this time he was much exhausted; and, having been placed one day in his cage near the fire, for the sake of the warmth, the heat, I am afraid, was too much for him, for he fell from his perch and died. All his transformations were over; and he looked like a little heap of dirty white ashes.”

Such was the tale, as my friend told it to me; but being rather anxious to learn as much as I could on the subject, I set about con-

sulting such books as were within my reach at the time. First came the modern edition of Cuvier's "Animal World," which asserts very positively that the chameleon's colour varies quite without reference to surrounding objects, and only in accordance with his own varying wants, feelings, and temper. The same book says that these reptiles have very large lungs, which, when filled with air, give to their bodies an appearance of transparency. Their movements, except with the tongue, are very slow; and there is so little sympathy between the two sides of their bodies, that one may be awake while the other is asleep. For this reason, they cannot swim, their limbs being quite unable to act in concert.

Mr. Wood, in his book on reptiles, says that the chameleon does not even *walk*, in the usual sense of the word; and as for *running*, that is a feat of which no chameleon would even dream; yet, when I happened to take up "The Attractions of the Nile and its Banks,"* I found its author saying, of a pet chameleon which he had himself kept, that it had so great a dislike to being put back in its cage that, when it saw him coming, it would *scuttle away* quite fast to a hiding place, and when captured would hiss and try to bite. This gentleman says that he was disappointed to find how slight was the variation in its colour, its usual hue being a light green, the exact tint of the leaves upon which it was found; often it turned yellowish, sometimes was covered with dark spots, and at others, especially if angry or frightened, it turned a dirty brown. Mr. Wood, on the other hand, writes that, though its usual colour is green, yet it passes from this through all the shades of violet, blue and yellow, of which green is composed; adding that, in this country, it rarely retains its bright green colouring, but becomes of a yellowish-grey or dead-leaf colour.

In Cassell's "Popular Natural History," I found the following account: "The tongue of the chameleon, with the exception of the fleshy tubercle forming the tip, is a hollow tube, which, when withdrawn into the throat, is folded in upon itself somewhat in the way in which a pocket-telescope is shut up. 'The remote cause,' says Dr. Weissenborn, 'of the difference of colour in the two lateral halves of the chameleon may in most cases be distinctly referred to the manner

* By the Rev. A. C. Smith.

in which the light acts upon the animal. The statement of Murray, that the side turned towards the light is always of a darker colour, is perfectly true. This rule holds good, as well with reference to the direct and diffused light of the sun or moon as to artificial light. Even when the animal was moving in the walks of my garden, and happened to come near enough to the border to be shaded by the box edging, that side (so shaded) would instantly become less darkly coloured than the other. Now as the light in these cases seldom illumines exactly one lateral half of the animal in a more powerful manner than the other, and as the middle line is constantly the line of demarcation between the two different shades of colour, we must evidently refer the two different effects to two different centres; from which the nervous currents can only radiate, under such circumstances, towards the organs situated respectively on one side of the mesial line. Over these centres, without doubt, the organ of vision immediately presides; and indeed we ought not to wonder that the action of light has such powerful effect on the highly irritable organization of the chameleon, considering that the eye is most highly developed.' According to Dr. Milne-Edwards, two layers of pigment exist in the skin of the chameleon, arranged in such a way as sometimes to appear blended together, while sometimes one entirely conceals the other, the animal being light or dark-coloured accordingly. The superficial pigment is greyish or yellowish-white, the deeper of a violet hue. Admitting this to be the case, Dr. Weissenborn thinks that there are still many points to be explained before we can say that we understand the phenomenon; inasmuch as no mixture of these two pigments would produce a pure yellow or red, both of which colours he has, however, seen the chameleon assume."

After reading all this, and much more, I came to the conclusion that we really had not made much progress since the days when the fable was written, and that the safest motto for those who attempt to describe a chameleon still is this:

"When next you talk of what you view,
Think others see as well as you."


Here was one declaring that he never saw it anything but iron-grey or brimstone yellow, though sometimes spotted; another asserted that it was naturally green, but of very various shades of green; one had

seen it red and yellow, and another had seen it blue and violet; while yet another, bolder than the rest, never having observed it either red, blue, or purple, announced that he did not believe it ever assumed these colours. Then, as to its teeth, opinions likewise differed, some asserting that it made use of them to crush its food, and others, with equal assurance, declaring that it swallowed flies and insects whole, without any attempt at mastication. Amid these conflicting opinions, I started off to the Zoological Gardens to see what I could with my own eyes; and in a cage at the end of the Reptile House, I found some five or six specimens, slowly crawling over the sanded floor, or clinging to the branches placed for them. Their general hue was that of the sand or of the bark of their perch, some of them having a few lighter or darker spots on their sides; but, so far as I could see at the moment, one might have matched the different shades of colour very well from a heap of dead leaves. Presently, however, the keeper, at our request, took some of them out of the cage; and one, which was of a dullish green, he placed on a scarlet and black shawl, by way of experiment. Instantly, the green faded; the creature which before had looked quite plump, shrank together like a bladder from which the air is escaping, and the dead-leaf hue spread gradually over its body. It did *not* turn red, to match the shawl, though of course there is no saying what it might have done, had we waited long enough; but it was next put into a sort of fern-case, among some green leaves, where it gradually swelled out again, and became of a brilliant green all over, even to its very eyelids. The instant the keeper took it up again to place it on the thick iron bar which runs round in front of the cages, one of its sides became speckled with dark brown; and, when placed upon the bar, its general colour was at first brown, mottled with green, then green with dark spots, varying constantly in size and position. The keeper told us that, in a sudden gleam of sunshine, he had seen them change colour instantaneously; but, unfortunately, the day we were at the gardens, the sun did not come out at all. It was very curious to watch the creature slowly creeping along the round iron bar, grasping it with its tail and feet; or, as happened once or twice, swinging from it only by its tail. Its feet, with the five claws, placed three in front and two behind, somewhat after the manner of parrots', and enveloped in loose skin, all but the tiny sharp claws, showed at once that the creature was intended not to walk upon any flat surface, but to climb

among the branches of trees. Its tongue I had not the luck to see; but, from all accounts, it seems to resemble that of the wood-pecker, at least in its power of extension.* The eyes were very prominent and globular, and were turned about quite independently of one another, in whatever direction the creature wished. This power of squinting, it may be remarked, is also shared by the hippocampus, or sea-horse, and some other animals. The skin of the chameleon was covered, even to its eyelids, with little roughnesses, which gave it somewhat the appearance of shagreen. This strange animal is now classed as the fifth family of saurians; and, as there are known to be some fifteen species, it may be that "all are right and all are wrong," in the varying accounts they have given.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER VII.

" HERE is one important part of the theatricals," said Mrs. Vernon, when they met at breakfast next morning, "that none of you seemed to think of last night."

"What is that, mamma?"

"Why, the audience; you surely are not so modest as to wish to act to empty chairs."

"Oh! of course we must have an audience; how odd, never to have thought of it! Who shall we ask?"

The Vernons did not know very many people in their neighbourhood. Colonel Vernon's death happening so soon after their arrival at the Hall had, of course, prevented Mrs. Vernon's going into society, and as the children were rather inclined to be shy of strangers, and, as we have seen in the case of their aunt, to take very unreasonable prejudices against them, they had generally been very ready to share their mother's fears of the effects of night air and late hours, when it was a question of accepting or declining invitations to tea at any of the neighbouring houses. There were, however, about half a dozen families with whom they were fairly intimate, and, after a little

* At the Zoological Gardens the chameleons are fed with grasshoppers as long as these can be procured.

discussion, a list of about twenty names of young people to be invited was agreed upon. The day was fixed, and the notes were written.

"I hope," said Mrs. Vernon, "there is no chance of your disappointing everybody at the last moment. What will the guests say, if, when they arrive, there should be no play?"

"I think I can answer for there being a play," said Fanny, "for when I went up to bed last night I found myself as eager for fame as our friend Augustus, and I set to work at once; and as I was wise enough not to open my window, the midnight oil burnt very well, and I made considerable progress."

The children at once begged to be allowed to see the manuscript.

"But not till it is quite finished," said Fanny; "then you shall have it to copy out each your own part. In the meanwhile, I think we had better devote ourselves to preparing for the Christmas tree. We have a great deal to do, and not overmuch time to do it in."

"Never mind the Christmas tree, or the play either," said Harry. "Let us go and skate. The ice is bearing splendidly just now, and in a day or two it will be gone."

"Yes, let us go and skate," chimed in Jack.

But Fanny Arnott was a woman of her word, and having promised to dress the dolls, was not to be tempted to break her promise; and Maud, who, it may be remembered, had come yesterday to the conclusion that the best part of skating was the coming in to tea after it, was equally conscientious, perhaps without a very severe struggle.

However, as the boys could not dress dolls, and as there would be time enough in the evenings to make as many card boxes as they could afford to fill with sugarplums, there was no reason why they should not skate while their aunt and sisters remained indoors to work. This arrangement suited everybody. The boys were well pleased to be able to have their own way with clear consciences; Maud was delighted at the prospect of a quiet morning with her aunt; Fanny Arnott was not sorry, since it was necessary to dress three dozen dolls as fast as possible, that she would not have two boys in the room during the process; and Mabel, who considered it her duty to provide the dolls with histories as fast as the others provided them with clothes, was unfeignedly glad to escape the teasing to which Jack always, and sometimes Harry, subjected her, when she played her stories in their presence.

Fanny Arnott was a very expert milliner. The most captivating of Liliputian costumes grew under her fingers with a rapidity that was all the more surprising because she seemed to give to her work only a small share of her attention; for while she ran seams, and gathered flounces, "like a fashion-book," as Harry remarked when he looked in for a moment, to announce that he had been to the rectory, and that Cousin Frank would be delighted to act as many parts in the play as Aunt Fanny liked to assign to him, she could also laugh and talk, and listen to the marvellous stories that Mabel was inventing about her customers. And when Maud endeavoured to draw her into more serious conversation, she was equal to that also.

"Aunt Fanny," said Maud, as they sat over their work, "weren't you going to say something more about duty yesterday morning, when breakfast-time came to interrupt us?"

"I don't know that I was actually going to say anything more about it then, but certainly there is much more to be said on the subject. What is it you want me to say about it?"

"What you think."

"Well, I think I deserved that answer for putting my question so clumsily. But suppose you tell me first what *you* think about it."

"That's what I hardly know. It does seem to me so very difficult to know what is one's duty. And though you say it is part of one's duty to be cheerful and happy, that must be only a very little part; and, indeed, it seems to me more like pleasure than duty."

"And you think duty can never be pleasure?"

"They always seem very different sorts of things. People say, 'duty first, pleasure afterwards,' you know; as if—as if duty was a sort of pill, and pleasure the jam one takes after it."

"Well, yes, people are apt to talk like that; but we might say better, that if duty is the disagreeable physic, the pleasure that comes after it is the health the physic gives us back."

"Oh! but——"

"But what?"

"I think you mean a different kind of pleasure from what I do."

"Do I? How?"

"I think you mean that sort of pleasure that one has when one knows one has done right."

"The peace that comes from sense of duty done?" I think that was

the kind of pleasure I meant—the kind of pleasure we call happiness. And you meant——”

“I meant by pleasure, play—amusement, you know, of any kind.”

“Well, I think you have made out very fairly that I did not quite keep to the point. For when we say, ‘duty first, pleasure afterwards,’ we clearly cannot mean the happiness that comes from doing one’s duty; because, as we could not well have our choice as to whether we would have that before or after the duty, there would be no need of a maxim to guide us. But I don’t feel quite satisfied with your definition of pleasure. Could we not find a better one?”

“I daresay *you* could.”

“Let us try together. You said pleasure was play or amusement of any kind, but I don’t feel satisfied with that. A great many things are pleasures to me that are not amusing, and not play, and there are a great many kinds of play that would not be pleasure to me at all; and I expect it is the same with you.”

“Yes, I think it is, now you put it like that. For instance, it is a great pleasure when you talk to me as you are doing now, and as you did yesterday morning; and that is not play certainly. What do you think is a good definition of pleasure?”

“Well, I think my notion of pleasure is that it is the gratification of our tastes and inclinations—the doing what we like, in fact.”

“Yes, of course; and duty?”

“And duty I should say is—come, I think it is your turn to define. You shall say what duty is. Pleasure is what we like to do, and duty——?”

“What we ought to do, I suppose.”

“Exactly. Then suppose we like to do our duty, does it not become pleasure?”

“Oh, Aunt Fanny, this is too bad! You have just made out duty and pleasure to be opposite things, and now you are making them out to be the same thing.”

“Not at all; I only make out that duty sometimes becomes pleasure, or rather that one thing may be at the same time a duty and a pleasure. A duty because we ought to do it, and a pleasure because we like to do it. And it seems to me that its having become a pleasure would be a very bad reason for leaving off doing one’s duty.”

“Well, yes, that would be a mistake; but I expect people don’t often make *that* mistake.”

"I am not so sure of that; people who think very much of duty, and who have got hold of the notion that duty and pleasure are opposite things, are very apt to argue in this way: 'If this is my pleasure, it can't be my duty. I must live to do my duty, and so I must give up pleasure in general, and this pleasure in particular;' and so they deprive themselves, and very often other people too, of pleasure, and neglect their duty at the same time."

"That is a pity."

"A great pity; and that is why I don't give in to your objections to my saying that part of one's duty in life was to be cheerful and happy."

"I see now why it isn't *not one's duty* to be happy and cheerful, but I don't see yet why it *is* one's duty."

"Don't you think it is one's duty to make other people happy?"

"Oh yes, I suppose there is no doubt about that."

"Nor I either; and do you think one makes other people happy by being melancholy and out of spirits?"

"No, but one can't always help it."

"Certainly not; but one can always help being more melancholy *than one can help*, and one can always try to get over one's low spirits for the sake of other people."

"Yes, one can try."

"And I only say it is one's duty to try. The success, if it comes, and it generally does come sooner or later, is what you call the jam after the pill, and I, the health after the physic. And the best of it is that the jam and the health come for others as well as ourselves."

"Then you think people always get happiness by doing their duty?"

"I think they always have the satisfaction of knowing they have done their duty—that is, almost always; there are some unhappy-minded people who never can make up their minds that they have acted rightly; but even they, I expect, are less unhappy when they have done their duty than when they have not."

"But *my* kind of pleasure, the jam—do you think that always comes?"

"Ah!—yes, I do think it always comes—some day and somewhere, but not always to the person who took the physic."

"But that does not seem fair."

"Not fair?"

"No. I think the person who takes the physic ought to have the jam."

"That is, you think the physic is the money we buy the jam with. We are to do our duty, not because we ought to do it, but because we can get our pleasure best that way? Which comes to, *duty is a round-about way of having one's pleasure*. I think you are making out duty and pleasure to be the same thing now."

"Oh, dear! I have got into a mess."

"A very common mess, and one that is the cause of disappointment to many people. There is nothing like making up one's mind that there is only one good reason for doing one's duty, and that is, that we ought to do it. If it is pleasant to do it, so much the better; if it is unpleasant, one has no right to grumble, because one made no bargain for its being pleasant."

"But then you said that the pleasure always came some time or other to some one; it is nice to think that."

"Very nice indeed. I cannot imagine any thought that would give people more courage to do their duty."

"But are you sure it is so?"

"I said just now that I thought it, but I am not afraid to say that I am sure of it, only I think it would be better to exchange the word *pleasure* for *good*, and to say that good will come if we do our duty."

"I wonder whether it is so!"

"I do not see how it can well be otherwise. When we think that everything we do and say must have some effect either for good or ill——"

"Oh! that is such a dreadful thought."

"A very serious one, certainly. But it has a comfortable side, I think, as well as a dreadful one, especially for those who are inclined to think that they have not much opportunity of doing good."

"But it is just in such a case as that that the thought would be worst."

"Why?"

"Because if one is always doing either good or harm I suppose the less good one does the more harm one must be doing."

"If it is a fact that every one does the same amount of work, you are quite right; but I don't know how you are to make out that. Suppose now we take up a simile that everybody is familiar with, and call doing right sowing good seed, and doing wrong sowing bad seed. And suppose two men receive each a packet of mixed seed, good and bad together, and one sows all his seed because he likes sowing (he is

an active, busy sort of man), without considering whether it is good or bad ; and suppose it happens that there is just the same quantity of good seed as of bad—the same quantity, neither more nor less—what do you think, when the harvest comes, will be the result ?”

“ I suppose there will be as much bad fruit as good.”

“ So I should think, and one would be almost inclined to say that, as the good is balanced by the bad, the man might just as well not have sown at all. Only there is always the chance of the seed from these crops falling into wise hands that will destroy the bad, and sow only the good. But again, on the other hand, the seed might fall again into bad hands. So that whatever good this man may happen to do may fairly be said, as far as his responsibility is concerned, to be neutralized by the bad that he does. Then let us suppose that the second man has a much smaller packet given to him, and that this small packet contains more bad seed than good—he is, you know, a man who is placed in very difficult circumstances—bad bringing up, perhaps, and great temptations—and has really little opportunity for independent action or for doing good to others. Well, suppose this man sorts his seed to the best of his powers, and sows only what he believes to be good, but makes mistakes, and sows some of the bad seed also, what crop will he have ?”

“ I suppose much good fruit, and some bad ?”

“ And what should you expect him to do, as soon as he found out his mistakes, by seeing the bad fruit that the bad seed had borne ?”

“ Would he not destroy it ?”

“ Probably, if he could. But suppose he could not destroy it all ; would there be anything left for him to do then ?”

“ I think he might warn people against the fruit, and also against making the mistake that he had done.”

“ Yes, he certainly might do these things, and he probably would. But now, to come to the point : which man will have produced most good fruit—the man who had little seed, or the man who had much ?”

“ The man who had much, after all.”

“ And why say *after all* ?”

“ Because I thought you were going to make out that the man who had little seed had produced the best crops.”

“ And so he has ; much better crops, because the proportion of good to bad is much larger, but he has not produced positively more good seed ; and I never tried to prove that he did. You must remember

that your remark, which gave rise to all this, was, that the less good one had the opportunity of doing, you supposed the more harm one did. And I think we have certainly shown that the man with little good seed, though he produced only a little good fruit, did not produce nearly so much bad fruit as the other man."

"Yes, you have made that quite clear. But now I want to know what is *my* duty, Aunt Fanny?"

At this moment in burst Harry and Jack, and Fanny could only answer that they must talk about that another time, and that, in the meantime, she advised her to finish "The Spanish Gypsy," in which Maud had already got deeply interested, and that perhaps she might find there some very useful lessons on duty.

This serious conversation had not been allowed to interfere with business; and, indeed, so much progress had been made in the course of the morning, that when, after luncheon, the boys protested against their aunt and sister returning to "that milliner's drudgery," and entreated them to come on the ice instead, they felt little scruple about allowing themselves to be persuaded.

Fanny Arnott faithfully kept her promise about the play. When she came down to tea on Thursday evening she held in her hand a roll of foolscap paper, at the sight of which a cry of delight broke from the children; so eager was each one to get the first sight of it that it is a wonder that neither author nor manuscript was torn in pieces. Fanny protested that "all rights were reserved," and, among others, the right of herself reading out the play before any one else saw it. Tea was therefore got through with all possible speed, and, as soon as the party had adjourned to the drawing-room, Aunt Fanny was installed in a comfortable chair by the fireside, and the children gathered round her, all eagerness to hear and admire her first effort in dramatic art.

Their expectations were more than fulfilled, and the play was pronounced perfect. Fanny Arnott had achieved the rare success of producing a play of which each part was thought delightful by the actor to whom it was allotted.

The play, being written, had now to be learnt. At first the children thought this would be a very laborious task, but they were surprised to find that in less than three days they knew, not only each their own part, but the entire play; and they showed such a fondness for repeating it that you could hardly ask them the simplest question without

receiving in answer a quotation from it, not always particularly appropriate.

And so, in preparations for the Christmas-tree, in skating, and in



talking of the play, the days went by very quickly and pleasantly, and all, as the children gratefully acknowledged, thanks to the aunt whose coming had been so much dreaded.

(To be continued.)

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.

Y DEAR TOBY,

I daresay you will think me very fickle. I mean to throw up our beloved trout, and fly from fish to flowers. To recall the old associations means really to put oneself once more in the old position, and feel the old sensations. Once more I am in the days of my youth, once more under the influence of the old mania. If only the phrenological world would listen, I am sure I could persuade them of the existence of a bump largely developed in the British schoolboy, but which the professors of the science have overlooked—I mean the bump of collections. Feel your own head, Toby, and see if you have got it. If you have not, probably these notes from my old diary do not amuse you much. They date from one period, and were made under the influence of one mode of thought. They mark a certain fixed stage in the mental progress of a schoolboy. And it is an important epoch, this epoch of collections. Have you reached it, Toby? On this depends my prospect of success in attempting to afford you some amusement out of my old diary. Why is it, Toby, that we schoolboys are so fond of collecting? I wonder if I can recall all the collections I ever made; and supposing I did, what a history theirs would be! What downfalls of dynasties to make way for others, what revolutions in schools of philosophy should I have to relate! Alas! the early records are not sufficient to furnish data as to the primitive collections. One of the earliest must have been oak-galls, or rather oak-apples, as we used to call them. Who can suggest at this interval of time the feeling which first prompted us to collect oak-apples. Yet so it was; the oak-apples were gathered, were put in boxes, were incarcerated till they began to shrivel, and the little worm or maggot which was in their centres crawled to the surface of his globe, wondering why everything was shrinking and drying up. Then were the nurses ruthless, and the whole collection was summarily ejected from the window. Not that it mattered much. The

collecting came over again. What inquirer into the motives of men can explain the change of desire from oak-apples to old steel pens? As far as I recollect, this was the next. Carefully collected in little boxes, the A's, and B's, and J's, and magnum-bonums, and small bonums, pens with two nibs, and pens with three nibs, pens in white metal, and black, and brown, and steel-blue—all were stowed away in a religious corner of the play-box and desk. So great was the infection, so mad the impulse of collecting, to the pens must needs be added a collection of labels. Sometimes at the beginning, sometimes at the end, sometimes at the top corner of the page, sometimes at the low corner on the inside of the cover of the books, we used to find a little label: *Printed by Black and Sons; Bound by White and Sons*. These were carefully taken out by putting the blade of a knife under them, and transferred to a book as regularly as the moderns stick their stamps and crests in their books. Some were oblong, some square, some round, some diamond-shaped, some red, some blue, and some brown.

Silk-worms, fossils, snail-shells, coins, birds-eggs, walnut-shells (polished), bits of lead-pencil cut at both ends to look like tip-cats, sea-weeds, fresh-water-weeds, butterflies and moths, living collections, menageries of blue-bottles in paper boxes, of caterpillars and chrysalises, and water beetles and tadpoles in an aquarium—all things, living and dead, of which there was any variety, became victims of the collecting mania. But, Toby, though in each and every collection my hunger for collecting found some satisfaction, in none did I take such delight as in my collection of wild flowers. Moreover, it survived the longest, and survives to this day. The butterflies were destroyed by the carelessness of housemaids. The snail-shells got mixed with the fossils, and broke; the pens have long since vanished; the birds-eggs have yielded to decay, and those which are not broken have lost their colours. The tadpoles have turned long since to frogs, the caterpillars to chrysalises, and the chrysalises to butterflies and moths; but the dried flowers and ferns remain almost the sole monument of the epoch of collections. As we grow older our interests grow possibly deeper, but they are assuredly narrowed to smaller confines; we have no longer time and energy to bestow on such a multitude of interests and the relics of our collections which have survived the accidents and wear of time remain the monuments of an epoch when our interests

were universal, and our likings no less so—an epoch of collections—an epoch

“When all the world was young, lads,
And all the trees were green,
And every goose a swan, lads,
And every lass a queen.”

Well, Toby, we gather wisdom from the experience of others, and, if you take the advice of your old uncle, you will not be laughed out of your mania for collections when it comes upon you by those of your schoolfellows who have not an idea of their own in their heads, nor yet be persuaded that it is waste of time and energy. Properly directed, the collecting mania is as harmless as measles, and equally necessary to every schoolboy's training. But, Toby, there is no doubt need of direction and guidance through this temporary insanity. To use as few words over it as possible, this is the lesson your old uncle draws from his experience : don't collect old pens, stamps, crests, labels, bits of pencil, and I think I will exclude menageries of blue-bottles and oak-apples. Fossils, shells, butterflies, and menageries of caterpillars and chrysalises are all worth spending some time and trouble upon, and, above all, botany is worth knowing. Now, Toby, I told you at the beginning of my letter that I was going to talk about flowers instead of fish. Well, as I have to get in what I want to say in a very few lines, I cannot give you a long lecture upon botany, but what I propose to do is to pull out my old collection, and you shall look over my shoulder and take hints as to what to seek and what to avoid. I have imagined that you have conceived the idea of making a collection of flowers—wild flowers. To-morrow you may have given it up for fossils ; but that is neither here nor there. You come to me, and say, “How am I to begin?” and I pull out my old collection to show you. Now, Toby, the fact of going out and picking some flowers is easy enough, though I shall have something to say on that presently ; but it is not nearly so easy to make a symmetrical collection. I began without thinking, and came to grief, naturally. I got a scrap-book, and stuck the flowers in as soon as they were dried, in any order. This is not wise, Toby. You learn very little of the science by it. You must have more symmetry and classification. Well, Toby, after I had got together a very shabby collection of specimens, and huddled them altogether in no order, I was not quite satisfied. By that time

I had found out that there is some reason for calling this flower by this name, and that by that, and that some were much more like each other than others, and, in fact, that I had a collection of specimens entirely unclassified. Well, Toby, in my despair I jumped from Dan to Beersheba. I got a lot of folio sheets of straw-paper and sewed them up in books. Then I took my book on botany, and began at the beginning, and copied out every name of every flower, Latin and English, two flowers in each page of my books. I am all right, thought I, now. As I get the flowers I will put them in their places according to their names as written in my book. Alas! Toby, my efforts were still vain. I had not succeeded in getting what I wanted. In some cases it did admirably; the flowers were small, and the page easily held them both in their places above their written names. But there came the awful moment when, having carefully pressed and dried two fine specimens of big plants—say, for instance, two of the mulleins—I found that they were destined for a page that would only just hold one of them. What was I to do? The remedy which necessity invented suggested the plan I afterwards adopted as a rule. I found that the only plan was to devote the whole page to one of the big plants, and insert another page for his brother. This was clumsy, and at last, Toby, the idea developed itself which you see here carried out. I have no *books*, you see, only loose sheets of paper. Each flower has a separate sheet. You must have a good-sized sheet to begin with, to hold your biggest specimens. Look at this black mullein, and this foxglove. They both only just get into the paper, and that by sloping them diagonally from corner to corner. I daresay, Toby, you think it waste of paper to give such a large sheet to so small a thing as this little tiny trefoil. It does seem a lack of economy at first sight, but try any other plan, and you will find that you waste more paper. No doubt, if you knew what size the flower was when you write the list of names in your book, you could assign them their places, and avoid the muddle I made. But even then you lose some advantages which this plan really gives; for instance, if you have spoilt a page in any way in your book it disfigures it. If you do any damage to one of my loose half sheets, I have only to supply its place with another. I need get no more paper than I actually want, I add pages to my collection as I get the flowers. Here you see my old collection. All the flowers are on loose sheets, or rather half sheets

We will take a specimen and examine it, and show up its faults. Here we are among the roses, and here is a plant which can only have come from some chalk pasture. I should not wonder if it came from some of the downs where that chalk trout stream I told you of bubbles along. I look down the page for the name, and I see *ROSACEÆ. Spiræa filipendula*—Common dropwort. "Why, what is that label you have written the name on?" I hear you say. It is a label from the chemist's shop, such as they put outside a medicine-bottle. I got them in packets, and the advantage of them is, that supposing you have named a specimen wrong, and some kind botanical friend, or your own subsequent researches, point out that the name must be corrected, if you have written it on your sheet of paper you have to scratch the wrong name out and put the right name in its stead, and the general effect is messy and ugly. But supposing that you can immediately stick another label over the one which contains the wrong name, you have preserved the neat effect of the page, and this neatness is most desirable in a collection. Now look at the flower; you see it is stuck to the paper by little slips of these very labels. They are ready gummed, and only want cutting up into slices to furnish bars with which to attach your specimen to the paper. Look again at the flower, Toby; it looks pretty enough. The leaves are all nicely laid out, the flowers are all distinct, and not huddled together; and perhaps from looking at the specimen before you, you might know the plant if you ever saw it growing. But, Toby, my eye detects a very serious and glaring mistake in that specimen. The *roots* are not there. Now, Toby, as a general rule, no specimen of any flower is entirely complete without flowers, leaves, stem, root, and fruit. But that is perhaps too much to expect, especially as you may only be in the district where you gather your specimen when it is in flower, and not yet in fruit. Still in this case the absence of the root is fatal, because you see it is one of the characteristics of the plant. It takes its name from the nature of the roots. *Filipendula* alludes to the oval roots, or tubers, which hang down by thin threads. It is as if four or five potatoes were attached to some threads hanging from the stem. You see, Toby, therefore, that to have omitted showing the roots in this case makes the specimen worthless. So, too, in such a case as the bird's-nest orchis, *Neottia nidus avis*, it would be much better to have the root without the flower, than the flower without the root. In the

same way you may get wrong by leaving out some other part of the plant besides the root. For instance, look at this specimen of a bee orchis, *Ophrys apifera*. The roots are perfect, the leaves are there, and the stem; but look at the flowers. The pods, or seed vessels, are there, and have pushed the shrivelled remains of the blossoms to their extremity. Here you have roots, pods, leaves, stem, and the vestige of blossom. But after all the distinguishing part of the plant, from which it takes its name, is the blossom, and this is not preserved in a perfect condition. And this mistake is likely to crop up at any moment; so in making your collection, Toby, get your plants in different conditions, or, at any rate, gather them when they have their characteristic features fully stamped upon them. You will gather from what I have said that in making a collection of flowers the digging them up, or gathering them, is very important. There are one or two little rules to be observed, but the matter is very simple. You should always get the *whole* plant. Don't gather the flowers and leave the leaves. Some plants have *radical* leaves, which are quite different in shape to those which grow higher up from the stem. These radical leaves, which spring as much out of the ground, so to speak, as the stem which bears the flowers, are often very important in distinguishing species, and must not be left behind. In some plants, again, the fruit is the most distinguishing feature, and so you will find that to know all the wild roses thoroughly you will have to recognise the different shapes and colours of the hips and haws. In gathering your plants, too, you will have to remember, Toby, that some plants do not flower at the same time that they are in leaf. Here is my old specimen of the common coltsfoot, which proves such a nuisance to the farmers in clay soils. You see that the leaf was evidently not pressed and dried at the same time as the flower. The leaf has been added since. Again, in gathering your specimens you will find that some are very fleshy and full of juice, such as the orchids. These will fade quickly unless they are kept out of the sun; so put them in your tin case. Other flowers are so fragile that by the time you get home they would have fallen to pieces if you carried them in your hand, or let them tumble about in the box. For these, Toby, you must take with you a little book with some blotting-paper in it. The outside of an old book with a little strap round it will do admirably. You must lay out your specimen at once. The


other flowers, of rather a coarser kind, may fade a little from carrying them in the sun, but if they are put in water when you get home they will pick up again. And it is important to have your specimens fresh when you put them between the sheets of drying paper. If they are drooping they come out looking draggled, and shabby, and shapeless. One more rule about gathering your flowers, Toby. Do not gather extravagantly big or particularly small specimens of a plant, but those of a medium size. Here is my old daisy, *Bellis perennis*. I remember, Toby, gathering this specimen well. I found it in the kitchen garden at home. You see it is very finely grown, and has ten or eleven flowers, all from the same root. Well, Toby, though it is an unusually good specimen, it does not really represent the ordinary specimen of a daisy. And while we are on this part of the subject, I will tell you that the growth of the plant depends very much upon the soil and situation in which it is growing. If the soil be very dry and barren the flowers will be small, and the plant stunted. If the soil be rich the flowers will be bigger, and the leaves and stalks much more developed. Well, Toby, I cannot undertake to tell you everything about making a collection of flowers in this short letter, I can only try to recall the difficulties I myself met with, and tell you how I overcame them. You will perhaps find, as I did, that as the number of flowers drying in your press increases, there will be a tendency in the pile of papers to get lumpy and irregular; a stout broom-rape (*Orobanche*) will make a hunch between the sheets of drying paper, and if you are pressing some delicate flower just above it, it will bend awkwardly the more delicately-formed tenant of the upper story. The best way to avoid this is to put some bits of board or cardboard between every half-dozen sheets of your paper or so. This will enable you to press all your flowers flat. Another thing to remember in pressing and drying your flowers is, that the main object to be gained in what you are doing is to *dry* the flowers. Unfortunately they would shrink and shrivel if some pressure was not applied to them, so that they must have *some* weight on them in the process. But recollect you are not trying how flat you can squeeze them, but how little that is necessary combined with drying them in a natural, unshrivelled condition. You will also find it more convenient, I think, to have your drying paper cut in *half sheets*. If you use whole sheets you are apt to leave specimens behind unnoticed when you clear your flowers out of the press; whereas, if you use half

sheets you simply lift them off one by one. I also found myself that to warm the paper before the fire just before putting the freshly gathered specimens in helped to keep the green of the leaves better. Change your drying paper often, Toby, and always dry it in front of a fire before using it again.

I have now told you something about gathering and drying your specimens, Toby. As to laying them out upon the paper there are not many rules. You may stick them on with slips of gummed paper, or you may stitch them on with a needle and thread. The last plan is, perhaps, the most satisfactory, and is absolutely necessary in the case of specimens which are thick and heavy. It certainly is the neatest, but it takes time. You have only to take a needle and some cotton, and passing it through from the underside of the paper, close to the side of the stalk of the flower, you can put the needle back to the lower side of the paper, close to the opposite side of the stalk. Repeat this operation a little lower down, as often as is necessary, and you will find your specimen look very neat. For the names of the flowers, Toby, you must look at the books. Begin right at the beginning, and learn to recognise a daisy, not by nursery instinct, but by the scientific characteristics mentioned in the books. It involves some drudgery, but you must be content to drudge in every branch of knowledge before you can get to the real enjoyment of it. You will never repent having learnt some botany, for such knowledge comes in useful every day. It helps you to enjoy the country and your garden, whether it be only a few flower-pots in a town window, or an extensive plot of ground far away from smoke and chimneys. Who knows, Toby, but what you may become a great botanist, and have a flower named after you, as the discoverer, before you are many years older. Look at this entry in my old diary: "*Heard from Mr. Cooke. My plant a fungus, never found before in Great Britain.*" A schoolboy wandering on the downs picked up a little plant which was speckled over thickly with little orange lumps. The plant was a rare one, *Thesium humiferum*, the bastard toadflax, but the little orange lumps were rarer. They were a species of fungus, a parasite that grew on the little plant which hid itself in the short grass of the downs, and no one had ever found them in England before. The schoolboy, Toby, was your Uncle, who tells you the story to encourage you in your searches after wild flowers, and subscribes himself

Your affectionate Uncle, &c.

FEMALE CHRISTIAN NAMES.

1.  If my opinion were expressed,
I think this name the prettiest.
2. But this, so sweet and musical,
I certainly love best of all.
3. This, with its quaint and homely sound,
Can never unemployed be found.
4. This, homely beside finer names,
The refined modern titles shames.
5. This, all true loyal hearts will find.
Brings back a tender king to mind.
6. She was misguided oft by this,
A beldam who destroyed her bliss.
7. This damsel lent her name to be
A heroine in minstrelsy.
8. Still is her deed remembered well
In orient lands by fair minstrel.
9. One, who could well romance relate,
A mystery makes this lady's fate.
10. The chosen lady of a hero,
We naturally admire her also.

IN THE WOODS.



O the lovers of natural history, whether devoted to animals or plants, the fir-woods of Perthshire are full of interest. The ground, carpeted with soft, spongy bog-moss, of which the vivid green is sometimes relieved by bright rose-coloured patches, is dotted over in spring-time with quantities of that beautiful northern flower, the chickweed winter-green, its delicate white blossoms even more starlike than those of the wood anemone, by which it is succeeded. Orchises—the sweet-scented butterfly and other kinds—spring up amongst tufts of heather and spreading beds of blackberry; and when

all the flowers are faded, the gorgeous fly amanite unfolds its splendid disc of orange-scarlet spotted with white, eclipsing with its brilliant colouring the humbler groups of brown and yellow funguses which grow around it.

But, for most people, the Scotch fir-woods owe their great charm less to the vegetable world than to the wild creatures which inhabit them. The coo of the wood-dove, the shrill call of the plover, and the still harsher cry of the curlew ring through them. You may hear the grouse chuck-chucking as it rises with a whirr and a rustle, startled from its moorland heather. The capercailzie flaps heavily from tree to tree, while a timid roedeer is occasionally seen bounding along in the distance. But more amusing than any of these, more frequent even than the hares and rabbits, which scamper incessantly across the path, are the charming little, bright-eyed, active squirrels. In some parts of Perthshire one is seldom for many minutes in the woods without seeing them at their gambols—sometimes running across the path, or climbing a tree, pausing every now and then to look warily around, and then darting off again at full speed—sometimes swinging themselves from bough to bough, and taking flying leaps of two or three yards as they chase each other from tree to tree, uttering their sudden sharp little cries, which are something between the barking of a small, impatient dog and the call of a hungry little bird. Often one will sit erect among the fallen leaves upon the ground, with tail curled over his back, and bright eyes blinking eagerly in all directions, while he nibbles at a beech-nut, or feasts daintily upon a great piece of fungus, held carefully between his fore-paws.

Autumn is the great time for squirrels, when their food is abundant, and they are busy laying by a store to last them through the winter. As the cold weather comes on their coats grow darker and thicker, and about the beginning of January they generally retire into winter quarters, not to leave them until the snow has disappeared. Squirrels build generally three nests—one for a winter retreat, which is hidden amongst the roots of trees, or in some other secret place; a second, also much sheltered, which is to serve as a home for their little ones; and a third, often in the top of a tree, which appears to be used as a sort of general sitting-room or summer-parlour. There is about this nest one peculiar feature, which shows in a remarkable degree the wonder-

ful instinct of self-preservation with which its tiny maker has been endowed. One part of it is made much thinner than the rest, so that, in case of an enemy attacking it at the usual entrance, the occupant may slip quickly through on the weak side, and escape.


The baby squirrels are very funny little things, not so long as their own tails, and with care and kindness they can easily be tamed. One tiny creature, taken from the nest in very early life, was fed at first from a boy's mouth with bread and milk through a quill six times a day; but its master, growing tired of so elaborate a process, taught it to eat by poking its nose into a saucer full of bread and milk, in which way it very quickly learnt to feed itself. It grew in time so tame that it would stand quite still on its master's arm to be stroked, though at first it trembled excessively at the touch of a strange hand. Once its cage was left open accidentally, and the squirrel, of course, escaped into the woods. But it came back again at the end of three days, having apparently had quite enough of freedom; and afterwards it would go off sometimes when it had the chance, but it always returned of its own accord at the end of a few hours, and appeared to find its cage more homelike than its native woods.

It seems very sad that such pretty, graceful little creatures should ever be regarded in the light of vermin; but they often do a great deal of mischief by nibbling at the young shoots, and spoil many a promising fir-tree by biting off its leader, so that keepers encourage their destruction, and boys are only too happy to assist. A bag is filled with little pebbles, a catapult is concocted with a bit of elastic and a forked stick, and the unfortunate "wee beasties" fall by dozens—some few to be roasted and eaten (and very delicious they are said to be—a sort of compound of rabbit, veal, and chicken flavour), but the greater number to be skinned and thrown aside. Their glossy coats are dried and stretched, and sewn upon crimson cloth; their bright little eyes are replaced by shining beads, or black buttons, and the walls and tables of their enemies' "dens" are thus adorned with trophies of the chase.

Alas, poor squirrels!




BOOK NOTICES.

 **MISSION LIFE.** Edited by the Rev. J. J. Halcombe, M.A. 2 vols. (W. Wells Gardner, 10, Paternoster Row.) "The Net Cast in Many Waters," 2 vols. Edited by Anne Mackenzie. (Bemrose & Son, 21, Paternoster Row.)

These two periodicals may be regarded as the Reports of Missionary work, carried on by the Church of England in our Colonies, during the past year, 1871. The scene of labour extends to the uttermost parts of the earth: the accounts show that our Lord's command to His Apostles is still being literally obeyed, that the ministers of His word should go forth and teach all nations. In America, Africa, India, China, and the far-off Islands of the Pacific, is the message of

the Gospel being proclaimed by our missionary clergy; and, whilst interesting accounts of their adventurous lives and hopeful labours are set forth for the general reader in Mr. Halcombe's monthly publication, Miss Mackenzie's pages more particularly appeal to younger members of the Church, in whom it is so desirable to cultivate a taste for inquiry into the gradual extension of Christ's kingdom upon earth, especially in heathen Africa, where Bishop Mackenzie nobly laboured and lost his life. A high tribute of respect is paid to the veteran Moffat's fifty years' experience amongst uncivilized tribes. In the second volume of "Mission Life" are six papers, called "Sunday Readings," which the Sunday School teacher will find very useful.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.

 **QUEEN PERONELLA** writes to inform "Water-lily" that "The Boy in Grey" has a political meaning, and is intended to describe the struggles of the monarch to propitiate the lower orders. It shows how the kingdom could not prosper unless the lower orders were on a friendly footing with the higher; so the King, the Boy with the Ruby, sets forth to make friends with the working population, the Boy in Grey, and eventually succeeds; so that when there is a great revolution he is saved by the love and friendship of the lower orders. Each Boy with his different precious stone of course represents a different class in the kingdom, as the military, the aristocratic class, &c.

Four correspondents tell "Psyche"

that the lines she asked for are in the hymn for St. Matthew's Day, in the "Christian Year."

"Florrie C." The first hymn you inquired about is taken from "Hymns for Public Worship," published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge; the second is by J. Chandler; and the fourth by W. W. How.

"M. F. S. P." recommends the following books to "Constance:" "Repertoire Héraldique," price 10s. 6d., bound in morocco leather, with gilt edges, which can probably be obtained from Messrs. Dulau and Co., 37, Soho Square, London; and "The Improved Postage Stamp Album," by G. S. Gibbons, price 1s. 6d., containing the names of the various countries on each page, which can be procured either from Stanley

Gibbons & Co., 15, Treville Street, Plymouth, or H. F. Kirkman, 21, Warwick Lane, London.

"Deane." Emphasis should be laid on the *last* syllable of the word you mention.

"Hunchy." Aunt Judy is much pleased to receive another testimony as to the success of "The Hunchback" when acted. She cannot make any promises about the next Burlesque so long before its appearance, but will do her best to comply with her young friend's wishes.

When did our "Twelve years' old" correspondent expect to get a reply to his note, if he did not understand that the magazine is published monthly? If he finds difficulty in obtaining the number wanted through a bookseller, he had better apply at once to Messrs. Bell & Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden. Can our readers recommend him an "easy book on astronomy?"

"Lizzie." Aunt Judy must refer you to the first paragraph in her correspondence in May for an explanation of the non-appearance of your advertisement.

"Lou and Frank." An account of the doll's house in Queen Anne's reign appeared in our number for October, 1870. The pictures and magazines you offer will be gladly accepted for the Cottage occupant, if sent to the care of the Secretary, 49, Great Ormond Street, London.

"A. G." is sincerely thanked for her kind note.

"M. S. G." asks for information as to "where she can find good definitions of words. She wants them comic, serious, picturesque," &c. Aunt Judy scarcely understands her requirements, but would not Trench's interesting book "On the study of words" be of some assistance?

"The Laird" asks how many characters there are in Miss Keating's plays of 'Ali Baba' and "Blue Beard?"

"Maggie" wishes to know if there is a sequel to "Little Lilla," by E. C.? Some receipts as to the best method of drying flowers appeared in the correspondence of our numbers for August, September, and November, 1870. The story inquired about will be concluded during the course of this year.

"Fatima" has two illuminations (a pair) done in the old style, with photographs in the middle, and wishes to sell them for charity; they are worth 18s. 6d. each, but being slightly soiled, she will let any one have them for 14s. 6d. Address, Cottenham Rectory, Cambridge.

Can any of our readers supply "Camilla" with the origin of the saying, "Queen Anne is dead?"

"May-fly." The habit of keeping May-day as a holiday dates back to the time of the Romans, who celebrated the fête of Flora, the goddess of flowers, at the beginning of the month; and Chambers (in his "Book of Days," vol. i. p. 572) says, "The custom of having a Queen of the May, or May Queen, looks like a relic of the heathen celebration of the day; this flower-crowned maid appears as a living representative of the goddess Flora, whom the Romans worshipped on this day." He attributes the idea of holding a feast at this season to the natural joy and admiration aroused in all minds by the sight of spring returning in all its beauty. "Nations," he says, "taking, more or less, their origin from Rome, have settled upon the 1st of May as the special time for fêtes of the same kind. With ancients and moderns alike it was one instinctive rush to the fields, to revel in the bloom which was newly presented on the meadows and the trees; the more city-pent the population, the more eager apparently the desire to get among the flowers, and bring away samples of them; the more sordidly drudging the life, the more hearty the relish for this one day

of communion with things pure and beautiful."

Aunt Judy fears she can recommend no plan of *preserving* plants from snails. She only knows the inhuman plan of picking the snails off the plant in the morning, and killing them with salt!

"E. C." asks if any one will kindly lend her a stamp snake for a few days as a pattern; she will pay postage. Address, Miss E. Charles, 8, Forest Place, Leytonstone, Essex.

"Mona." Aunt Judy believes that some difference of opinion exists as to what may be called the "Seven Wonders of the World." Mr. Timbs, in his "Curiosities of History," reckons them as follows: 1. The Great Pyramid of Egypt. 2. Babylon. 3. The gold and ivory statue of Jupiter Olympus. 4. The Temple of Diana of the Ephesians. 5. The Tomb of Mausolus. 6. The Pharos of Alexandria. 7. The Colossus of Rhodes. Can any one tell "Mona" of an interesting Irish history?

"Ida" asks if "there are any cheap books of plays to be had, and what they are called?" She had better apply to a bookseller for help in this matter.

"A Canadian" asks, "which is the best time of year for grafting orange-plants, and whether they will bear forcing immediately after the process?" Aunt Judy must refer you to Mrs. Beeton's "Cookery Book" for the cake receipt wanted.

"C. E. W." inquires what poem contains the words "Time the avenger?"

If "Zoë and Madeline" will send their address to Miss L. Collier, Carthamartha, Callington, Cornwall, she will give them patterns of some pretty and useful things for a bazaar. "Lizzie's Aunt" suggests that they should crochet some anti-macassars.

Can any one tell "Louie" who is the author of No. 309 in "Hymns Ancient

and Modern," "Fierce raged the tempest?" Hymn 325 is by the Rev. F. W. Faber.

"Edward, a Schoolboy." Aunt Judy is delighted to hear that her magazine is so popular amongst your schoolfellows. She thinks that a paper-knife and a nice book would be very appropriate and acceptable presents. Your taste for drawing ought certainly to be cultivated by lessons, if your parents are willing. It is a charming occupation in all its branches—landscape sketching, figure drawing, &c.

"A. J." Eggs are thankfully received for the patients in "Aunt Judy's Cot."

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, May 15th, 1872.

The contributors to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot" Fund will be pleased to hear that the subscription list for the *Second Cot*, which is to be placed in the Boys' ward of the Hospital, has made a very satisfactory beginning, nearly 18l. being already received. The arrangements in reference to the appropriation of the contribution list for the first Cot, now completed, amounting to 1000l., establishing in continuance the "Aunt Judy's Cot," have been concluded to the entire satisfaction of the Editor.

The little patient "Toby" (now well-known to the contributors by the distribution of her portrait to a large number of applicants) still continues to occupy the Cot; the picture by Mr. Faulkner conveys a good idea of what she is like, but only those who know her can tell how the little grave wondering face can break into sunshine and smiles—smiles of the most roguish and bewitching character. Poor Toby's life is certainly not all sunshine; to insure her recovery, the doctors require her to be very quiet, while her taste prefers a very active existence in the narrow sphere of her cot. She has many small trials, which

are not always borne with that exemplary patience which is desirable, and would be commendable in an older child, but which cannot be looked for in an almost baby patient. "Now, Toby, you must not sit up; what would the doctor say if Nurse lets you wriggle about in this way?" is sometimes followed by a lusty roar, and some heartbreaking sobs. A toy or picture-book from the nurse's magic toy cupboard, or a musical-box set going in another part of the ward, will, all at once, dispel the tears, bring the roar to a sudden stop, and be succeeded by a merry little laugh from the little lady, who has quite forgotten how hard it was a minute before to be obliged to do what is best. Will it surprise the young friends to hear that Toby has been a means of usefulness in the ward? Even small people like her can sometimes do good, perhaps unconsciously. Toby's influence extended to a poor little creature in an adjoining cot, who was received into the Hospital from the Newport Market Refuge: her name is Fanny; she was very ill, and it was feared that she would soon be removed to "the better land." She lay in her cot quite unconscious for many days, and when she began to recover physically, it was feared that her reason would be affected and her mind never again recover its tone. She scarcely noticed, or spoke to any one; but Toby was the first being who attracted her attention: poor Fanny's dawning intellect seemed to *understand* Toby, and she would watch her with a sort of dreamy interest, and after a time try to smile at her. Toby soon began to reciprocate her smiles, and at length took so much interest in "little gal" (considerably *bigger* and *older* than herself!) as to lend her toys and pictures: when Fanny would speak to no one else, she would interchange civilities with Toby across another cot. Fanny is now recovering, and is bright and cheerful—a sweet and interesting child, the special

favourite and companion of Toby. "Is Fanny to return to the Refuge?" say some of the young friends. It is hoped that by the kind interest being exerted on her behalf the poor orphan may be placed in some home where a brighter future will be before her.

Photographs of Toby will be supplied gratuitously to all the young friends who desire to possess a copy, on application to the Secretary, Mr. Whitford, enclosing an addressed and stamped envelope for the carte to be sent in.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to May 15th, 1872.

£ s. d.

A. C. A. M., "In memory and in the beloved name of"			
(annual)	1	1	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	2	0
Maude and Mildred (monthly)	0	2	0
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie (monthly)	0	1	3
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Little Etta (for three months)	0	1	6
A. G. (for three months)	0	0	9
Mary and Stella (annual)	0	5	0
A Lenten Offering from two schoolboys, E. and H. W.	0	2	6
A Travelled Monkey	0	2	6
E. H. G., 7s., B. B., 5s.	0	12	0
Alice and Edith Turner, Sheffield, also a box of dolls and useful articles	0	2	0
G. M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
Gertrude E. Scott	0	0	6
Speedwell (collected)	0	5	0
C. H. G. G. E.	0	10	0
E. B. H., K. H., D. H.	1	2	6
"Thank-offering for the recovery of a child from a dangerous accident"	1	10	0
Joyce Lucy (collected)	0	3	2
"Twelve years old"	0	1	0
An old Crabcatcher	0	1	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Benjamin Jackson Green . . .	0	2	0	A Primrose	0	2	0
Children at Abingdon Vicarage	0	6	0	Emma and Edith (collected) .	1	4	6
Granny's ladies, Wales . . .	0	3	0	Alice Fanny Lawson, 1s.,			
A. B., B. B., G. P. B., T. B.,				Arthur William Lawson, 6d.,			
M. Bidder, 6, Cedars Road,				Hughie Lawson, 6d., Mrs.			
Clapham	0	8	5½	Lawson, 6d., 11, St. John's			
"One who has seen the Cot" .	1	0	0	Park, Blackheath	0	2	6
The White House	0	1	0	Joe, Nancy, E. W., and Misty,			
A Woolly Pig	0	0	6	Kersall Hill	0	2	9
Collected by E. S., 35, Eaton				Ernest, Bertie, Polly, Arnold,			
Square	0	1	3	Julia, and Limpstone, Hazel			
Black Pudding	0	1	0	House, Methley	0	3	0
Aliky Jalk	0	4	0	Florence A. Mynors (collected)	0	2	0
Herbert and Lucy (collected) .	0	10	0	Florence and Minnie's Raffle,			
Lily, 1s., Janie, 1s., Little				with the help of other girls			
Harry, half a sixpence, Ty-				at Bury Cottage, Godal-			
main, Tarback	0	2	3	ming	0	2	0
J. S. B.	0	3	0	A Lynn Mastiff, with a parcel			
A Schoolroom contribution				of books	0	2	6
from Ellen, Jane, Mary,				Chicken, 6d., Annie, 6d.,			
Sarah, Alice, Flossy, Carrie,				Father, 3s., Mother, 1s. . .	0	5	0
Two Lilies, Two Annies,				Polly Smith's money-box, Tor-			
Two Katies, and Lizzie H.,				quay	0	6	0
at Heathers Bank, Ilkley,				Eleanor Grace	0	1	0
Yorkshire	0	10	0	Padré, 2s. 6d., Madré, 2s., Be-			
In token of gratitude from				belle, 1s. 3d., Peggy, 6d.,			
"Huuchy"	0	5	0	Bee, 6d.	0	6	9
E. H.	0	2	6	Dodo	0	4	0
Collected by Two little Birds .	0	4	6	F. S. W., Dublin	0	3	0
Kerrenhappuck, 1s. 6d., Jam-				M. L. and C. L., Middlethorpe			
setjee Jones, 1s., Shalma-				Manor, York, a parcel of			
nezer, 1s., Jabberwocky, 4s.,				clothing.			
Edelherz, 5d., Mamma,				Two little Doves, a scrap-book.			
1s. 1d.	0	9	0	A "May Flower" from Wrex-			
Gertrude M. Gynn, Great				ham for "Toby," Mrs. Bar-			
Marlow	0	1	0	bauld's Hymns in Prose,			
The Mother, 1s., E. A. H., 1s.,				sent by E. O.			
Maud, 1s., Maybell, 1s.,				E. S. H. S. and F. S., some			
Queen Mub, 4d., Retiarus,				books, puzzles, and a little			
1s., H. H., 1s., Sunbeam, 3d.,				doll.			
Ethel, 1d.	0	6	8	Laury Minchin, picture cards.			
From the Birdies over the Sea,				Winnie and the Kitten, some			
8s., Collected by E. Robin-				wild flowers.			
son, 10s.	0	18	0	Alice Cowie, some wild flowers.			
Proceeds of a May-day Gar-				Mary, a scrap-book.			
land, Tunstall Rectory . . .	0	6	0				




SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XVI.

ELEANOR'S THEORIES REDUCED TO PRACTICE.—STUDIES.—THE ARITHMETIC MASTER.

 ADAME was not ungenerous to an apology. She believed in Eleanor, too, and was quite disposed to think that Eleanor might be in the right in a dispute with anybody but herself. Perhaps she hoped to hear her triumph in a discussion with Mr. Henley; or perhaps it was only as a punishment for her presumptuous remarks that Madame started the subject on the following day to the drawing master himself.

"Miss Arkwright says your trees are all one, Mr. Henley," she began. (Madame's English was not perfect.) "Except that the half are yellow and the other half blue. She knows not the kind even."

The poor little drawing master, who was at that moment "touching up" a yellow tree in one of the younger girl's copies, trying by skilfully distributed dabs to make it look less like a faded cabbage-leaf, blushed, and laid down his brush. Eleanor, who was just beginning to colour a copy of a mountain scene, turned scarlet, and let her first wash dry into unmanageable shapes as she darted indignant glances at Madame, who appeared to enjoy her bit of malice.

"Miss Arkwright will observe that these are sketches, indicating the general effect of a scene; not tree studies."

"I know, Mr. Henley," said poor Eleanor, in much confusion; "at least, I mean I don't know anything about water-colour sketching, so I ought not to have said anything; and I never thought that Madame would repeat it. I was thinking of pencil drawings and etchings; and I do like to know one tree from another," she added, honestly.

"You draw in pencil yourself?" asked Mr. Henley.

"Oh, no," said Eleanor; "at least only a little. It was my mother's drawings I was thinking of; and how she used to show us the different ways of doing the foliage of different trees, and the marking on the bark of the trunks."

Mr. Henley drew a sheet of paper from his portfolio, and took a pencil from his case.

"Let us see, my dear young lady, what you remember of these lessons. The pencil is well cut. There are flat sides for shading, and sharp ends for outlines."

Madame's thin lips pursed with the ghost of a smile, as Eleanor, with hot cheeks and hands, came across the room to put her theories into practice.

"I can't do it, I know," she said, as she sat down, and gave herself one of those nervous twitches common to girls of the Hobbledehoy age.

But Eleanor's nervous spasms were always mitigated by getting something into her fingers. Pencil and paper were her favourite implements; and, after a moment's pause, and a good deal of frowning, she said, "We've a good many oaks about us;" and forthwith began upon a bit of oak foliage.

"It's only a spray," she said.

"It's very good," said the drawing master; who was now looking over her shoulder.

"Oak branches are all elbows," she murmured, warming to her work, and apparently talking to herself. "So different from willows and beeches."

"Ve-ry good," said Mr. Henley, as Eleanor fitted the branches dexterously into the clusters of leaves; "now for a little bit of the oak bark, if you please."

"This is only one tree, though," said Madame, who was also looking on. "Let us see others, Mademoiselle."

"Willows are nice to do," said Eleanor, intent upon her paper; "and the bark is prettier than oak, I think, and easier with these long points. My mother said branches of trees should be done from the tips inwards; and they do fit in better, I think. Only willow branches seem as if they ought to be done outwards, they taper so. Beech trunks are very pretty, but the leaves are difficult, I think. Scotch pines are easy." And Eleanor left the beech and began upon the pine, fitting in the horizontal branches under the foliage groups with admirable effect.

"That will do, Miss Arkwright," said the little drawing master. "Your mother has been a good guide to you; and Mother Nature will

complete what she has begun. Now we will look at the copy, if you please."

Eleanor's countenance fell again. Her pink mountain had run into her blue mountain, and the interrupted wash had dried with hard and unmanageable outlines. Sponging was the only remedy.

Next drawing-lesson day Mr. Henley arrived a few minutes earlier than was his wont, staggering under a huge basket containing a large clump of flags and waterside herbage, which he had dug up "bodily," as he said. These he arranged on a tray, and then from the bottom of the basket produced the broken fragments of a red earthenware jug.

"It was such a favourite of mine, Miss Arkwright," said he; "but what is sacred to a maid-of-all-work? My only consolation, when she smashed it this morning, was the thought that it would serve in the foreground of your sketch."

Saying which, the kind-hearted little man laid the red crocks among the weeds, and after much pulling up and down of blinds to coax a good light on to the subject, he called Eleanor to set to work.

"It is *very* good of you," said Eleanor, emphatically. "When I have been so rude, too!"

"It is a pleasure," said the old man; "and will be doubly so if you do it well. I should like to try it myself," he added, making a few hasty dashes with the pencil. "Ah, my dear young lady, be thankful that you will sketch for pleasure, and not for bread. It is pleasanter to learn than to teach."

Out of gratitude to Mr. Henley alone, Eleanor would have done her best at the new "study;" but apart from this the change of subject was delightful to her. She had an accurate eye, and her outlines had hitherto contrasted favourably with her colouring in copies of the sketches she could not like. The old drawing master was delighted with her pencil sketch of his "crockery among the reeds," and Eleanor confessed to getting help from him in the choice and use of her colours.

"Studies" became the fashion among the more intelligent pupils at Bush House; though I have heard that experience justified the old man's prophecy that they would not be so popular with the parents as the former style had been. "They like lakes, and boats, and mountains, and ruins, and a brighter style of colouring," he had said, and, as it proved, with truth.

Eleanor was his favourite pupil. Indeed, she was in favour with all the teachers.

A certain quaint little German was our arithmetic master; a very good one, whose patience was often sorely tried by our stupidity or frivolity. On such occasions he rained epithets on us, which, from his imperfect knowledge of English, were often comical, and roused more amusement than shame. But for Eleanor he never had a harsh word. She was thoroughly fond of arithmetic, and "gave her mind to it," to use a good old phrase.

"Ah!" the little man would yell at us. "You are so light-headed! Sometimes you do do a sum, and sometimes not; but you do never *think*. There is not one young lady of this establishment who thinks, but Miss Arkwright alone."

I remember an incident connected with the arithmetic master which occurred just after we came, and which roused Eleanor's intense indignation. It was characteristic, too, of Madame's ideas of propriety.

The weather was warm, and we were in the habit of dressing for tea. Our toilettes were of the simplest kind. Muslin garibaldi, for coolness, and our "second-best" skirts.

Eleanor, Maria and I shared one room. On the first Wednesday evening after our arrival at Bush House we were dressing as usual, when Emma ran in.

"I'm so sorry I forgot to tell you," said she; "you mustn't put on your muslin bodies to-night. The arithmetic master is coming after tea."

"I don't understand," said Eleanor, who was standing on one leg as usual, and who paused in a struggle with a refractory elastic sandal to look up with a puckered brow, and genuine bewilderment. "What has the arithmetic to do with our dresses?"

Emma's saucy mouth and snub nose twitched with amusement, as she replied in exact mimicry of Madame's broken English:

"Have you so little of delicacy as to ask, Mademoiselle? Should the young ladies of this establishment expose their shoulders in the transparency of muslin to a professor?"

Maria and I burst out laughing at Emma's excellent imitation of Madame; but Eleanor dropped her foot to the floor with a stamp that broke the sandal, and burst forth into an indignant torrent of

words, which were only stayed by the necessity for resuming our morning dresses, and hastening downstairs. There Eleanor swallowed her wrath with her weak tea; and I remember puzzling myself, to the neglect of mine, on the probable connection between arithmetic masters and transparent bodices.

CHAPTER XVII.

ELEANOR'S REPUTATION.—POOR MARIA'S HEALTH AND TEMPER.—THE DOCTOR.

WE were not jealous of Eleanor's popularity. She was popular with the girls as well as with the teachers. If she was apt to be opinionated, she was candid, generous, and modest. She was always willing to help any one, and (the firmest seal of friendship!) she was utterly sincere.

She worked harder than any of us; so it was but just that she should be most commended. But of all who lagged behind her, and who felt Madame's severity, and created despair in the mind of the little arithmetic master, the most unlucky was poor Maria.

I say unlucky advisedly, for I do not think she was much to blame. For some little time before we left Riflebury, she had been rather out of health, and not seldom out of temper. Fits of unreasonable irritability and feverish perversity had by turns angered and puzzled Aunt Theresa, who took counsel with ladies of her acquaintance. From them she heard strange stories of similar instances, and yet stranger theories to account for them. The advice of the majority was, that Maria should be sent to school.

Major Buller laughed at the stories, stamped his foot at the theories, and set his face firmly against the advice. Even though the old doctor recommended school also, his other prescriptions having failed to cure Maria's lassitude, and his pompous manner and professional visits rather increasing her irritability.

"It's like packing off a troublesome son to the colonies, my dear," said the Major. "And though Doctor Brown may be justified in transferring his responsibilities elsewhere, I do not think that parents should shunt theirs in this easy fashion."

Miss Airlie, also, was strongly averse from Maria's being sent to school; but Mrs. Minchin and several other ladies pressed Aunt Theresa hard; and when the news came that Eleanor was going to

Bush House, the Major consented to send Maria also, on condition that I went with her.

Maria's irritability was certainly repressed in public by school discipline, but her health rapidly declined. And this without its seeming to attract Miss Mulberry's notice.

Indeed, she meddled very little in the matter of our health. She kept a stock of "family pills," which she distributed from time to time amongst us. They cured her headaches, she said; and she seemed rather aggrieved that they did not cure Maria's.

But poor Maria's headaches brought more than their own pain to her. They seemed to stupefy her, and make her quite incapable of work. Her complexion took a deadly, pasty hue, one eye was almost entirely closed, and to a superficial observer she perhaps did look—what Madame always pronounced her—sulky. Then, no matter how fully any lesson was at her fingers' ends, she stumbled through a series of childish blunders to utter downfall; and Madame's wrath was only equalled by her irony. To do Maria justice, she often used almost incredible courage and effort to learn a task in spite of herself. Now and then she was successful in defying pain; but by some odd revenge of nature, what she learned in such circumstances was afterwards wiped as completely from her memory as an old sum is sponged from a slate.

To headache and backache, to vain cravings for more fresh air, and to an inequality of spirits and temper to which Eleanor and I patiently submitted, Maria soon added a cough, which seemed to exasperate Madame as much as her stupidity.

Not that our French governess was cruelly disposed. When she took Maria's health in hand and gave her a tumbler of warm water every morning before breakfast, she did so in all good faith. It was a remedy that she used herself.

Poor Maria was furious both with Madame's warm water cure, and Miss Mulberry's pill-box. She had a morbid hatred of being "doctored," which is often characteristic of chest complaints. She struggled harder than ever to work, in spite of her headaches; she ceased to complain of them, and concealed her cough to a great extent, by a process known amongst us as "smothering." The one remedy she pined for—fresh air—was the last that either Miss Mulberry or Madame considered appropriate to any form of "a cold."

This craving for fresh air helped Maria in her struggle with illness. Our daily "promenade" was dull enough, but it was in the open air; and to be kept indoors, either as a punishment for ill-said lessons, or as a cure for her cough, was Maria's great dread.

Night after night, when Madame had paid her final visit to our rooms, and we were safe, did Eleanor creep out of bed and noiselessly lower the upper sash of our window to please Maria; whilst I sat (sometimes for an hour or more) upon the bolster of the bed in which Maria and I slept together, and "nursed her head."

What quaint, pale, grave little maids we were! As full of aches and pains, and small anxieties, and self-repression, and tender sympathy, as any other daughters of Mother Eve.

Eleanor and I have often since said that we believe we should make excellent nurses for the insane, looking back upon our treatment of poor Maria. We knew exactly when to be authoritative, and when to sympathise almost abjectly. I became skilful in what we called "nursing her head," which meant much more than that I supported it on my knees. Softly, but firmly, I stroked her brow and temples with both hands, and passed my fingers through her hair to the back of her head. I rarely failed to put her to sleep, and as she never woke when I laid her down, I have since suspected myself of unconscious mesmerism.

One night, when I had long been asleep, I was awakened by Maria's hysterical sobs. She "couldn't get into a comfortable position;" her "back ached so." Our bed was very narrow, and I commonly lay so poised upon the outer edge to give Maria room that more than once I have rolled on to the floor.

We spoke in undertones, but Eleanor was awake.

"Come and see if you can sleep with me, Margery," she said. "I lie very straight."

I scrambled out, and willingly crept in behind Eleanor; and after tearful thanks and protestations, poor Maria doubled herself at a restful angle, and fell asleep.

Happily for me, I was very well. Eleanor suffered from the utter change of mode of life a good deal; but she had great powers of endurance.

Fatigue, and "muddle on the brain," often hindered her at night from learning the lessons for next day. But she worked at them

nevertheless ; and tasks, that by her own account she "drove into her head" in bed, though she was quite unable to say them that evening, seemed to arrange themselves properly in her memory before the morning.

Maria's ill-health came to a crisis at last. To smother a cough successfully, you must be able to escape at intervals. On one occasion the smothering was tried too long, and after the aggravated outburst which ensued, the doctor was called in. The Bush House family practitioner being absent, a new man came for him, who, after a few glances at Maria, postponed the examination of her lungs, and begged to see Miss Mulberry.

Maria had learned her last lesson in Bush House.

From the long interview with the doctor, Miss Mulberry emerged with a troubled face.

Lessons went irregularly that day. Our quarter of an hour's recreation was as much extended as it was commonly cut short, and Madame herself was subdued. She became a very kind nurse to Maria, and crept many times from her bed during the night to see if "*la pauvre petite*" were sleeping, or had a wish that she could satisfy.

Indeed, an air of remorse seemed to tinge the kindness of the heads of Bush House to poor Maria, which connected itself in Eleanor's mind with a brief dialogue that she overheard between Miss Mulberry and the doctor at the front door :

"I feel there has been culpable neglect," said Miss Mulberry, mournfully. "But——"

"No, no. At least not wilful," said the doctor ; "and springing from the best motives. But I should not be doing my duty, Madam, towards a lady in your responsible position if I did not say that I have known too many cases in which the ill results have been life-long, and some in which they have been fatal."

CHAPTER XVIII.

ELEANOR'S HEALTH.—HOLY LIVING.—THE PRAYER OF THE SON OF SIRACH.

MARIA went home, and Eleanor and I remained at Bush House.

I fancy that when we no longer had to repress ourselves for poor Maria's sake, Eleanor was more sensible of her own aches and pains.

She also became rather irritable, and had more than one squabble with Madame about this time.

Eleanor had brought several religious books with her; books of prayers and other devotional works. They were all new to Maria and me, and we began to use them, and to imitate Eleanor in various little devout customs.

On Sunday Eleanor used to read Jeremy Taylor's "Holy Living and Dying;" but, as we never were allowed to be alone, she was obliged to bring it downstairs. Unfortunately, the result of this was that Miss Mulberry, having taken it away to "look it over," pronounced it "not at all proper reading for young ladies," and it was confiscated. After this, Eleanor reserved her devotional reading for bed-time, when, if she had got fairly through her lessons for next day, I was wont to read the Bible and other "good books" to her in a tone modulated so as not to reach Madame's watchful ear.

Once she caught us.

The books of Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus from the Apocrypha were favourite reading with Eleanor, who seemed in the grandly poetical praises of wisdom to find some encouragement under the difficulties through which we struggled towards a very moderate degree of learning. I warmly sympathized with her; partly because much of what I read was beautiful to read, even when I did not quite understand it; and partly because Eleanor had inspired me also with some of her own fervour against "the great war of ignorance."

But, as I said, Madame caught us at last.

Eleanor was lying, yet dressed, upon her bed, the window was open, and I, sitting cross-legged on the floor, was giving forth the prayer of the Son of Sirach, with (as I flattered myself) no little impressiveness. As the chapter went on, my voice indiscreetly rose:

"When I was yet young, or ever I went astray, I desired wisdom openly in my prayer.

"I prayed for her before the temple, and will seek her out even to the end.

"Even from the flower till the grape was ripe hath my heart delighted in her: my foot went the right way, from my youth up I sought after her.

"I bowed down mine ear a little, and received her, and gat much learning.

* * * * *

"Draw near unto me, ye unlearned, and dwell in the house of learning.

* * * * *

"Put your neck under the yoke, and let your soul receive instruction : she is hard at hand to find.

"Behold with your eyes, how that I have had but little labour, and have gotten unto me much rest.

"Get learning——"

"Eh, Mesdemoiselles ! This is going to bed, is it ? Ah ! Give me that book, then."

I handed over in much confusion the thin S.P.C.K. copy of the Apocrypha, bound in mottled calf, from which I had been reading, and ordering us to go to bed at once, Madame took her departure.

Madame could read English well. The next day she did not speak of the volume, and we supposed her to be examining it. Then Eleanor became anxious to get it back, and tried both argument and entreaty, for some time, in vain. At last Madame said,

"What is it, Mademoiselle, that you so much wish to read in this volume of the holy writings?"

"Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus are what I like best," said Eleanor.

"Eh bien !" said Madame, nodding her head like a porcelain Chinaman, and with a very knowing glance. "I will restore the volume, Mademoiselle."

She did restore it accordingly, with the historical narratives cut out, and many nods and grimaces expressive of her good wishes that we might be satisfied with it now.

In private, Eleanor stamped with indignation (whether or no her thick boots had fostered this habit I can't say, but Eleanor was apt to stamp on occasion). We had our dear chapters again, however, and I promised Eleanor a new and fine copy of the mutilated favourite as a birth-day present.

Eleanor was very good to me. She helped me with my lessons, and encouraged me to work. For herself, she laboured harder and harder.

I used to think that she was only anxious to get all the good she could out of the school, as she did not seem to have many, so-called, "advantages" at home, by her own account. But I afterwards found that she did just the same everywhere, strained her dark eyes over books, and absorbed information whenever and wherever she had a chance.

"I can't say you're fond of reading," said Emma one day, watching Eleanor as she sat buried in a book, "for I'm fond of reading myself, and we're not at all alike. I call you greedy!"

And Eleanor laughed, and quoted a verse from one of our favourite chapters: "They that eat me shall yet be hungry, and they that drink me shall yet be thirsty."

CHAPTER XIX.

ELEANOR AND I ARE LATE FOR BREAKFAST.—THE SCHOOL BREAKS UP.—

MADAME AND BRIDGET.

ELEANOR and I overslept ourselves one morning. We had been tired, and when we did get up we hurried through our dressing, looking forward to fines and a scolding to boot.

But as we crept downstairs, we saw both the Misses Mulberry and Madame conversing together on the second landing. We felt that we were "caught," but, to our surprise, they took no notice of us; and as we went down the next flight we heard Miss Mulberry say, with a sigh, "Misfortunes never come alone."

We soon learnt what the new misfortune was. Poor Lucy had been taken ill. The doctor had been to see her early that morning, and had pronounced it fever—"Probably scarlet fever; and he recommends the school being broken up at once, as it isn't long to the holidays." So one of the girls told us.

Presently Miss Mulberry made her appearance; and we sat down to breakfast. She ate hers hurriedly, and then made a little speech, in which she begged us, as a personal favour, to be good; and if it was decided that we should go, to do our best to get our things carefully together, and to help to pack them.

I am sure we responded to the appeal. I wonder if it struck Madame, at this time, that it might be well to trust us a little more, as a rule? I remember Pæony's saying, "Madame told me to help myself to tea. I might have taken two lumps of sugar, but I did not think it would be right."

We were all equally scrupulous; we even made a point of speaking in French, though Madame's long absences from the schoolroom, and the possibility of an early break-up for the holidays, gave both opportunity and temptation to chat in English.

On Friday evening, at tea, Miss Mulberry made another little speech. The doctor had pronounced poor Lucy's illness to be scarlet fever, and we were all to be sent home the next day. There were to be no more lessons, and we were to spend the evening in packing, and other preparations.

We were very sorry for poor Lucy, but we were young; and I do not think we could help enjoying the delights of fuss, the excitement responsibility and packing, and the fact that the holidays had begun.

We were going in various directions, but it so happened that we all contrived to go by the same train to London. Some were to be dropped before we reached town; one lived in London; and Eleanor and I had to wait for half an hour before catching a train for the north.

For I was going to Yorkshire. The Arkwrights had asked me to spend the holidays with Eleanor. There was now nothing to be done but for us to go up together, all unexpected as we were.

How we packed and talked, and ran in and out of each other's rooms! It was late when we all got to bed that night.

Next morning the railway omnibus came for us, and with a curious sense of regret we saw our luggage piled up, and the little gate of Bush House close upon us.

As we moved off, Bridget, the nosegay-woman, drew near. Madame (who had shed tears as she bade us adieu) opened the gate again, ran out, cried shrilly to the driver to stop, and buying up half Bridget's basketful at one sweep, with more tears and much excitement, flung the flowers in amongst us. As she went backwards off the step, on to which she had climbed, she fell upon Bridget, who, with even more excitement and, I think, also with ready tears, clung to the already moving omnibus, and turned her basket upside down over our laps.


I have a dim remembrance of seeing her and Madame seem to fall over each other, or into each other's arms; and then, amid a shrill torrent of farewells and blessings in French and Irish, the omnibus rolled on, and Bush House was hid from our eyes.

(To be continued.)



COLSTON'S CHARITY.

A BRISTOL LEGEND.

“OW build me a noble school-house
 As any may wish to see;
 Let the walls be fair and strong,
 The light of heaven be free.

“Let the door be wide and grand,
 The entrance easily known;
 And over that entrance place me
 A dolphin carved in stone.”

So spake the good old merchant,
 With trembling joy spake he;
 For his heart was full of thanks
 For the miracle wrought at sea.

* * * * *

He was passing the Bristol quay
 In the teeth of a fearful gale;
 And he told of his home-bound ship,
 And his listeners all turned pale.

The rocks, the rocks in the channel!
 She must soon be dashed to a wreck;
 With all the wealth in the cabin,
 And all God's souls on deck.

“That wealth shall be God's,” said Colston,
 And he made Him a solemn vow,
 “If He graciously spare those precious lives
 Safe through the tempest now.”

* * * * *

On the ship was wild confusion:
 “She has sprung a leak,” they cry:
 “To the pumps, and pump for your lives;
 If the water gain we die.”

They pump with a desperate vigour,
 They try to stop the leak;
 But the water gains upon them,
 And their hopes and arms grow weak.

"Pump on, my men," cried the captain,
 "The harbour is just in sight;
 Work on for your lives to-day,
 God knows where we rest to-night."

Then the water suddenly lessened,
 The captain went to the hold;
 With wondering looks returning:
 "God's ways are manifold.

"We could not check the water,
 Nor stop the leak," quoth he;
 "But God hath stopped it thoroughly
 With a dolphin from the sea."

'Twas thus they came to the harbour,
 And though they were nearly a wreck,
 The wealth was all in the cabin,
 God's precious souls on the deck.


Mothers, and sisters, and sweethearts,
 Came thronging to the quay,
 To hear of God's great miracle,
 The leak which was stopped at sea.

* * * * *

And the school was built by the merchant,
 And the children wear to this day
 A dolphin deftly woven
 On the sleeve of their garments grey.

WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY—*continued.*

AN AFTERNOON IN THE BOBOLI GARDENS.

" THESE are the gardens belonging to the king's palace," I explained, in reply to a question of Blanche's; "but they are open to the public for two afternoons in the week. They are so beautiful in themselves, and the view from them is so lovely, that I think they will give us quite enough to talk about this evening.

"We went on a Thursday, and spent the whole afternoon there. It was not such lazy work as it sounds, for there was a good deal of climbing to be done. I can hardly hope to make you see them with my eyes. In the first place, you will not feel the heat as I did before-

hand, which made their deep shade so delightful, nor will you be able to smell the fragrant bay-trees. Oh, it is impossible to describe properly the Boboli Gardens!"

BLANCHE. We can fancy the shade and the sweet smell, you know.

"You will have to fancy a good deal, Blanche, I am afraid; but I will do my best.

"The Pitti Palace stands on the slope of a hill, and the gardens stretch up behind it to the top, so the fine broad walks are all steep. When we entered we were much amused and interested by the swarms of nurses and children who were to be seen in all directions. An Italian baby in arms is a funny sight, and an Italian nurse even more so."

KITTY and BLANCHE. Do tell us about them.

"The nurse holds not the baby, but a cushion; usually a smart silken one trimmed with lace. On this cushion the baby is tied with blue or pink ribbon, and the little creature looks exactly like a small mummy. It has a wee, dark face, and large black eyes, which give it an old look; and it is placid and comfortable, and exceedingly unlike an English baby, for I never heard one cry. The nurse's costume is very smart and picturesque. They wear white lace caps, or sometimes only long lappets, with handsome gold or silver pins stuck on each side of the head, a lace fichu, or handkerchief, crossed over the shoulders, and a long broad sash of some bright colour round the waist. Generally, also, there are knots of ribbon to correspond, with long ends on each shoulder. They are usually great handsome women, and set off their finery to advantage."

BLANCHE. But why are they so smart? Mamma says it is a very bad thing for servants to dress much, and once she sent away the kitchen-maid because she would wear a blue necklace on Sundays outside her shawl; don't you remember, Kitty?

CHARLIE. Well, I am sure *you* wear a necklace, Blanche, only it's red instead of blue.

BLANCHE, *bridling*. I'm rather different to a kitchen-maid, Charlie.

"It is not a question of smart dressing at all, Blanche," I said; "it is simply a costume—the custom of the country. It is just as much a matter of course to them, as your wearing white frocks and coloured sashes in the evening is to you."

"How very funny!"

"It is very pretty; and they have certain rules about the way they

wear their ribbons; at least, a lady told me it was the custom there. Whether it is so in all parts of Italy, I cannot say. If the baby they have the care of is a boy, they tie their sashes on the right side; if a girl, on the left; whilst for twins the bow is worn in the middle."

A crash! Charlie had been balancing himself on the back legs of his chair during this dress discussion, and in so doing had tipped himself over, chair and all, and lay in a heap on the floor; all that was visible of him being two fat knickerbockered legs sticking out from under the prostrate chair. There was a general rush to pick up both chair and Charlie. The former was broken, being a good deal the worse for Master Charlie's habitual kicks and fidgets; the latter was unharmed.

"I didn't say 'Oh, bother!'" was the first thing he said, as I picked him up and smoothed down his curls.

"No, you didn't, Charlie," said I, unable to help laughing, "you only acted it, and there was no rule about that. Come, we won't talk about the nurses and babies any more, but you shall look at my photograph, which gives a bit of the palace, and a small piece of the view from the broad walk, which slopes up ever so far behind it."

KITTY. Oh, there is the bell-tower! how pretty it looks!

BLANCHE. Yes, and there is a bit of the cupola to the right, half hidden by the trees.

CHARLIE. What are these very tall black trees in front?

"They are cypresses, the most beautiful, solemn-looking trees you ever saw. They seem to stand here like sentinels keeping watch over the loveliness below. Those old, blue-green giants, looking so mysterious in their height and reverend age, how I loved them! This picture does not give enough of them for you to see properly what they are like; but I made a study or two of them in my sketch-book—here they are. Those two are in the Campo Santo, or cemetery, at Pisa, and are the largest I tried to draw."

KITTY. The palace isn't very pretty, Miss Hay!

"No. It is a fine massive building enough, but it does not look well in this picture. You ought to see the whole of it to judge what it is; and now for the gardens. Don't expect beds of bright-coloured flowers, as in England. They are more pleasure-grounds than, strictly speaking, gardens. Great broad walks cross each other at right angles, with avenues of trees on each side, which make the whole place delightfully shady. One or two narrower walks are altogether

dark, and embowered with the shadow of old bay-trees which have met each other overhead, and form a thick solid arch of fragrant verdure. Seats are placed here and everywhere at intervals, so that when you get tired of the sun, and the hum of the people, you can sit and fancy yourself far away from anything like a city. We rested for some time, and then went down a steep walk to the left, and came unexpectedly upon a large round basin of water, with a fountain and statues placed in niches in the wall of trees, ilexes, I think, which surrounded it.

"Then there were more walks, hedges of roses, houses full of botanical plants, an orangery, and gates enclosing the private gardens of the king, where of course the public were not admitted, but from which came a rich, heavy scent of orange blossoms. We wandered about in the shade till it was time to go home, feeling almost as if we had been in the enchanted gardens of a fairy tale."

OLD STREETS.

"CHARLIE, you will be pleased this evening, I think, for I am going to ask you to come for a walk again."

Charlie's reply was to seat himself on a stool by me, open his eyes very wide, and plant his two fat hands on his knees.

BLANCHE and KITTY. Where are we going to walk to, Miss Hay?

"Well, I think we will take a look at some of the old streets, and for that purpose we will first cross the river by the Ponte alle Grazie, and go into the Via Bardi. Via means street, and Bardi was the name of a famous old family in Florence in days gone by. They lived in this street, I suppose, and so it was called after them. The chief thing by which you know an old street is the curious pavement. All the Florence streets are paved with large stones, but whereas the new ones are regularly placed, and tolerably even, the old ones are full of ups and downs, and the stones are of all shapes and sizes. They are what is called polygonal, or many-sided, being cut quite irregularly, and then fitted to one another, so that the effect is like badly-arranged patchwork."

CHARLIE. It must hurt the horses' feet.

"Yes, it is cruel work for them, poor things, but there are so many sharp corners, and such crowds of people, that the cab-drivers cannot drive fast. The Via Bardi is very long, very narrow, and very dark and cool."

BLANCHE. Why is it dark?

"Because of the tall houses on each side, which shut out the sun, so that one side of the street is always shady."

KITTY. Is it like Lombard Street in London, where papa took me once to see the bank?

"Oh, no, Kitty, not half so wide, and the houses much taller. The windows too are barred with iron, which makes them look very dreary."

BLANCHE. Oh, dear, Miss Hay, they must look like prisons. Can people never look out?

"I will explain to you how the Italian houses are built, and then you will see that they are much more comfortable, and much more fitted for a hot climate than if they were built like ours."

"You ring the door-bell, and the door opens as if by magic, for you see no one. You enter a sort of vaulted corridor, with doors round it, and you see a stone staircase in front of you, which you mount. At the first landing there is another door with a bell, which you ring, if your friends live on the first floor, and which is opened by a servant. This leads to a set of rooms, drawing, dining, and bedrooms, besides the kitchen; so that you see there are many small houses as it were under one roof, and a great many families in one house."

ALL. How very funny! but do they all have the staircase? And who lives in the rooms downstairs? And how can you tell where your own friends live, if there is only one bell?

"How am I to answer you all at once? Yes, the staircase is a common one, and, I am sorry to say, not always very clean. As for the rooms below, they were full of stores in the house I was in; for instance, wood was kept in one, and one was empty, and only used for luggage, when there was any that wanted stowing away. I don't know if it is the same in all the Florence houses, but I think so. There are as many bells as there are floors, so you have only to know where your friends live, and you can get at them easily enough."

CHARLIE. And are *all* the windows barred with iron?

"Oh, no! only in the old streets and palazzi, or palaces; but they used to be so in former times for defence. You don't know yet, but you will know when you have read more history, that the different cities of Italy were at constant war with one another. Of course when the streets were full of armed soldiers, and fighting continually going on, the strong iron bars were a great defence and protection."

CHARLIE. How jolly to see such a lot of soldiers!

"I don't know much about that, Charlie; it could not have been very jolly to have bloody battles, such as went on more than once in the Via Bardi. It is much jollier to my mind now that it is peaceful. It has less noise and traffic in it than any street in Florence, and it is only the backs of the tall, grand old houses which look on the street. You enter most of them through arched doorways into courtyards, and through the opposite entrances I caught many a peep of bright, cool gardens, grass, and fountains, as I walked along. For when I described a Florence house to you just now, I was not talking of the very best kind where the grandest people live; they, of course, are not divided into sets of apartments."

BLANCHE. Tell us about them, please?

"They are built round large paved courts, which you enter through a dark arched entrance, deliciously cool after the hot glare of the streets. A porter usually sits there in a grand livery. The court has a fountain in the middle, and orange-trees, and other sweet shrubs and flowers, and sometimes marble statues placed about it. The sitting rooms are, like the other houses, upstairs; and there is almost always a large garden behind, or, when the palazzo stands within walls apart from the street, all round it. These gardens are lovely with trees and verdure, and they give great pleasure to passers-by, as I know; for it was an endless delight to me to see, as I walked along in the glare and heat, the tangles of purple wistaria, or yellow Banksia rose, throwing their clusters over the high walls, and to get a passing whiff of the scent of orange or citron.

"They are delicious places, but there are no velvet-like lawns as we have. You could not play croquet there, Kitty, and there are often huge plaster statues in the worst taste. In fact, their beauty is not exactly the beauty we love in an English garden, with its well-kept paths and shaven lawns."

KITTY. I shouldn't like a rough lawn at all. Why don't they mow them?

"They do mow them sometimes, but they have not the same kind of fine grass as we have, and the climate is too dry for anything to continue very green long."

BLANCHE. Two or three years ago, we had so little rain that the grass looked quite brown and ugly, almost as brown as the walks.

"Yes, but we have not got on far with our walk, and there is the bell. We must go a little farther another day."

(To be continued.)

[THE Editor of "Aunt Judy" has lately been asked to contribute new stories of her own to her magazine. This her failing health renders impossible; but she is tempted to offer her young readers a tale, written very long ago, which is not inappropriate at the present day. It was privately printed in 1853, but never passed beyond the circle of friends. Nor has it ever found a place amongst her other writings; its fantastic wildness not admitting of its classification, and being of doubtful popularity.]

But now that the Apostle of Wonder has charmed the world by his "Wonderlands," there is nothing to be apprehended on the score of eccentricity, and the Editor reprints the Tale, with its title-page and Preface, as they originally stood. There is surely no necessity to point the moral of the old woman's bonnet by a reference to recent events.]

May 8th, 1872. ,

"IT WILL DO TO ASTONISH THE BROWNS."

BEING A TRUE (AND HITHERTO UNPUBLISHED) ACCOUNT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF

THE GREAT IDEA

IN THE HANDS OF THE THREE WISE MEN OF GOTHAM.

THE WHOLE TENDING TO THROW LIGHT ON THE SOMEWHAT OBSCURE HISTORY OF
THOSE REMARKABLE PAGES!

Attempted by

MARGARET GATTY.

PREFACE.

THAT this work is made known to the public at a time when the "GREAT IDEA"—being no longer the fashion—is neither an object of adoration nor a proper subject for satire, is not at all to the point; for it was written in the year 1848, four years before the "great Idea" of Republicanism had given way (for the second time in the course of one century, in one country) to the "great Reality" of Empire.

The writer can plead neither the entreaties of private friends nor the pressure of public opinion for her rash act, having, in fact, no excuse to offer beyond the tempting possession of a printing-press. She requests those, however, who may consider her remarks as coming "a day after the fair" to remember, that the old woman wore her bonnet until "the fashion" came round again.

MARGARET GATTY.


Ecclesfield Vicarage, June 13th, 1853.

"I WILL GOVERN FRANCE BY AN IDEA."—*Lamartine.*

"Three wise men of Gotham *
Went to sea in a bowl;
If the bowl had been stronger,
My song had been longer."

Ancient Nursery Rhyme.

1.

T was in the reign of King Solomon the Second that a great idea burst forth upon the benighted universe.

For nearly six thousand years the world had groaned beneath evils too mighty for expression—wrongs too great for endurance! Nowhere—from the tops of the highest mountains to the depths of the profoundest valleys—on the broadest expanse of oceans—in the bosom of the lowest mines—nowhere, nowhere had the great Charta of existence been fully developed—nowhere had the created enjoyed unrestricted happiness.

It was time the great idea arose. And arise it did at last!—It dawned like the star of the morning, heralding the change from darkness to light. It shone like the first gleams in the horizon announcing the advent of an eternal sun. No one at first knew whence the thought arose or by whom it had been originated. Lost in sottish contentment, like swine fattening for destruction, men had forgotten their birthright and inheritance—their freedom to walk the globe over unrestrained—their equal right to share it among them—and their claim to call every man a brother.

So when the great idea arose it was a stranger. Yet it stole from mind to mind, from heart to heart, from lip to lip. It spread like the plague at Cairo—like the cholera in India—swiftly—surely—unaccountably—irresistibly—till the whole earth became saturated with this one thought—this one hope—this one eternal conviction!

The idea was, the perfectibility of human happiness. Its watchwords were LIBERTY—EQUALITY—FRATERNITY.

The kings of the earth arose by common consent, and with loud

* Gotham, a town in Nottinghamshire, whose inhabitants have for centuries enjoyed an unenviable reputation for folly and stupidity. See "Fuller's Worthies," vol. ii., p. 569; also "Notes and Queries," vol. ii., pp. 476, 520. Also the "Cornhill Magazine," May, 1872, in which they are described as taking a lantern to the dial at night to see what o'clock it was.

voices cried "*Whence came it?*" But no one answered. Only King Solomon the Second, he knew in his secret soul—for closeted in his curtained pavilion, the Three Wise Men of Gotham held secret counsel together—returned from their sea excursion in the bowl.

* * * * *

2.

One of the profoundest mysteries of the childhood of many generations has been the fate of the Three Wise Men of Gotham—one of the unanswered questions of that inquiring age! How many a lovely eye, keen in its innocent intelligence, has been fixed anxiously on the mother's face, while imploring to know what *became* of those three poor men? Did they ever get back to land? or did the bowl sink down with its unusual freight, when they got out into the ocean among the dark green waves?—And were the Three Wise Men living down below at the very bottom of the sea, in rocks and caverns, among beautiful polished shells like those in the drawing-room cabinet? And were the Three Wise Men of Gotham really such funny fussy old fellows, with powdered wigs and black gowns on, as the nursery pictures represent—or were they nice men with kind faces like papa's? . . . To these and many thousand such sweet inquiries (full of childhood's strange mixture of imagination and simplicity) the fondest mother could only answer with a smile, in the words of the mysterious poem—

*"Had the bowl been stronger,
My song had been longer."*

Alas! for the disappointed little hearts who could find no pleasure in the smile, and gather no satisfaction from the baffling words!

3.

But the mystery was not to last for ever—for the Three Wise Men at length returned to shore—and making straight for the palace of King Solomon the Second, they breathed into his ear the great—the all-humanizing idea, and echoed and re-echoed around him the three immortal watchwords, ~~FOR~~ LIBERTY—EQUALITY—FRATERNITY—and the King's whole soul was fired with enthusiasm; and he spent all the afternoon in making the Three Wise Men repeat to him the celestial theory. And the next day, when, as he was shaving, his eldest born son asked him (as he had often before done) whether he who

was so wise could not at last tell them what was become of the Three Wise Men of Gotham—the King smiled—and instead of uttering as usual the rubbishy couplet respecting the equivocal strength of the bowl—he took hold of his son's little hand—pressed it warmly in his own, and gazing into his sweet blue eyes with emotion, exclaimed, "The Three Wise Men of Gotham have returned in their bowl, my darling, and have brought with them THE GREAT IDEA!"

Bursting away to avoid further inquiry, the King hurried from the room, but the nursery hounds were at his heels, and ere he could reach the door of his cabinet, six young hands were laid on his robes, and six young voices joined in one tremendous shout, "What is the great idea, papa? and what will the great idea do?"

"The great idea is—the great idea, of course," replied the King; "and," added he, drawing himself up with majesty—"it is to govern the world!"

With these words the door was closed on the children's faces, and they slowly retraced their steps to the nursery.

"For *my* part," said a sweet fat little girl, with soft rosy cheeks, as she sat down to dress her doll, "I'm very glad they're come back safe, but I shall never care a bit about the Three Wise Men any more, now I know they're not drowned and dead."

"But I think I shall always hate them," rejoined the eldest boy; "for if the great idea is going to govern the world, how can I ever be king?—I wish the nasty men had stayed at home!"

4.

The children of King Solomon were *unanswered*; but nevertheless they were as much puzzled as ever, only in a different direction. It was now the "great idea" that filled their tongues, but no notion of which ever reached their heads. They went to their mother for information, but she only laughed at their importunity, and told them that both they and their papa had been talking a great deal of nonsense—which, poor thing, she solemnly believed, for she had dabbled a little in Horne Tooke, and had her own private opinions as to what an idea was. "At all events, my dears," said she, "you and I can know nothing about it until we see it, but *I* have a great idea that it's only one of your papa's chimeras."

"Oh, thank you, thank you, now I know!" almost screamed a tall

fair-haired girl, the eldest of the family ; and dashing from the drawing-room, she burst open the door of the library, seized hold of the first book on heraldry she could see, and dragged it triumphantly back. And therein, sure enough, did she find—amid turkey-cocks, cherubim and fang teeth—the lively portraiture of a Chimæra;—a most equivocal beast, having, as the heraldic description avers, the head of a lion breathing flames, the body of a goat, and the tail of a dragon.

"Well!" exclaimed their mother, after a hearty laugh, "I believe that's as good an idea as any after all." But who shall describe the horror of the nurses when the children told them that the Three Wise Men of Gotham had just landed, and had brought a horrid dragonny kind of beast home with them?

To make assurance doubly sure, the same fair young girl produced to view on a sheet of foolscap paper a magnified edition of the heraldic Chimæra, brilliant in all the colours of the rainbow, and with *such* a tail! Underneath was written, "PORTRAIT OF THE GREAT IDEA JUST LANDED, WHICH MAMMA THINKS IS A CHIMÆRA, OR BEAST OF THE DRAGON SPECIES."

5.

King Solomon's heart grew large in his bosom, and his soul expanded to a giant size. The three immortal watchwords were ever on his lips, and he stole away in the early dawn from his palace, with only a speaking-trumpet under his arm, and ascended the highest mountain of his dominions, and placing the trumpet to his mouth, exclaimed: "Oh! my brethren, my brethren of the north, my brethren of the east, the west, the south, of every point and subdivision of the inexplicable compass! Has the progress of society brought to you the great idea?" And a wind arose, and sounds were heard, and a thousand "Yeses" filled the air. And so the Kings of the earth spoke together awhile, and they appointed the Himalaya Mountains for a meeting-place, and a day and an hour, that they might come together, and there in the wide illimitable expanse of earth and sky discourse of the great idea, and the regeneration of the world, and proclaim the end of restraint, and the dawn of freedom to the inhabitants of the earth. And so, ere many days had elapsed they met on the heights of the Himlaya Mountains.

Yes, to the tops of the heights they came, and they spread out green

baize for a council-table, and the Kings of the earth sat around. And the Three Wise Men of Gotham sat apart and concealed, and no one knew they were there but King Solomon the Second, whose wife had overclouded his mind with jesting doubts, so that he desired the presence of the sages to prevent his memory from dwelling on the words of the foolish woman, who had called the great idea a Chimæra, and shown to him the nursery picture of the brilliant monster.

6.

So when all the Kings were seated, the royal eyes encountered each other, but no one would be the first to speak! And the King on the right of King Solomon bowed to King Solomon, and King Solomon bowed to his neighbour, and so the bow went round the council-table; but still no one spoke!

And again the bow went round, and still no one spoke!—and the King on the right of King Solomon laid his left hand upon his heart, and waved his right hand to King Solomon, in token that he should speak. And King Solomon laid his left hand upon his heart, and waved his right hand to his next-door neighbour, in token that *he* should speak. And the gesture went round the table—but still no one, spoke! Then the King on the right of King Solomon stood up and folded his arms on his bosom, and stamped his foot, and looked imploringly at King Solomon that he should speak. And King Solomon did the same to his next-door neighbour, and so the gesture went round, and the Kings remained seated round the council-table,—but still no one spoke! Then King Solomon shrugged his shoulders—and all the other Kings shrugged their shoulders—but still no one spoke!

And the evening dews began to descend from heaven on the heights of the Himalaya Mountains, and the distant views became lost in a purple haze, and the Three Wise Men of Gotham got very hungry. Then one of them, weary of the silence, peeped out of his hiding-place, and seeing the silent Kings grimacing thus horribly among themselves, his great mind divined the glorious cause.

It was the triumph of principle over custom, and the wise man's heart glowed with fire divine, and he seized a harp that hung suspended to the walls of the grotto, and coming forth from his damp hiding-place, swept his hands triumphantly across the strings, and

struck a chord in ecstasy. And as he struck, he sang, and his voice rose like the shout of barbarian onset, and the word was—"EQUALITY!"

But the evening dews had relaxed the strings of that noble harp, and it was horribly out of tune, and the chord the wise man struck was a discord, and it was fearful to hear; and the noise of the cry, and of the false chord, was so discordant that it jarred on the tympanum of the King of the South, who was musical; and he clapped his fingers to his ears, and rushing forward to the astonished Sage, exclaimed, boiling over with indignation, "What atrocious noise are you making!—begone, monster!"

And now the ice was broken, and all began to talk. And a second Sage appeared from the grotto, and endeavoured to appease the fury of the King of the South, by laying one hand on his collar, and with the other pointing to the banner of—"LIBERTY!"

"To Jericho with your rubbish, you twaddling goose!" exclaimed the indignant King (speaking, alas! in the short madness of wrath); "to Jericho, I say, with your rubbish! Do you think that you or any other half-witted old rascals, to whom providence has denied the blessing of a musical ear, are to have the 'liberty,' as you call it, of annoying their more favoured neighbours with impunity?—the 'liberty' of playing such detestable sounds as those I just now heard?—No! No! The liberty of . . . pleasing . . . oneself . . . is one thing . . . but . . . the . . . liberty . . . of . . . plaguing . . . one's . . . neighbour . . . is . . . another."

And the King's voice sank . . . and sank . . . and sank . . . as he spake; for he felt that his ideas of liberty were becoming confused, and a horrible doubt crossed his mind, and he hoped that ONE restraint, at least, would be allowed in his dominions.

Alas! and when he caught himself hoping thus, he heaved a heavy sigh, and retired to meditate, for he was thunderstruck at the prospects thus opened by the watchwords of the great idea. And turning into the grotto for solitude, he stretched out his arms in agonized emotion,—as if straining in body and mind after the great ideal that warmed his soul.

But it was no mere ideal dream that filled his arms, when the plethoric form of the third Wise Man—fresh from a quart of double stout, and in all the fulness of gown, cassock, and bands, threw himself

rapturously on his bosom, and murmured an hysterical—"FRATERNITY"—in his ear.

* * * * *

7.

Savagely cross was King Solomon the Second when he came home to tea that night, for he came home without his crown! They had rolled it down the sides of the Himalaya Mountains by common consent, though against his particular wish.

But if all men are to be equal, who can wear a crown?—so he was forced to submit.

"I can't make it out, tho', quite," muttered King Solomon to himself, as he trudged home with his poor bare head. "Why, my head's as cold as ice! and they haven't even lent me a cap!—and I've been forced to do what I don't like!"

And the King made a noise that sounded very like a growl of discontent, as it rose to the empyrean.

"At home and at tea once again," said King Solomon's wife. "My love! your head aches."

"It does no such thing," muttered her affectionate husband.

"Where is your crown, my dear?" asked the lady.

"I don't know," answered her spouse.

"I will have it cried then," exclaimed the Queen indignantly, and rising to ring the bell.

"Sit down, you goose!" shrieked the King; "the other Kings have rolled it down the Himalaya Mountains."

"I will send the constable after them, then, with a warrant for petty larceny—or perhaps for high treason,—whichever you think best," proposed the Queen; "but certainly for one or the other."

"Goose!" shrieked the King once more—"nobody is to wear a crown now—we are all to be equals, don't you know?"

"Ah, dear! I remember now—but I had quite forgotten.—To be sure, how these great ideas do go out of one's head now and then!—What can one do?—Well! never mind, my dear.—But how cold your poor head is!—I will cover it up."

And King Solomon's wife brought down a crochet smoking-cap, and placed it on his head, and he grew warm, and sipped his tea in comfort.

TEA! Expander of the heart! What a strange influence is thine!—It needed but four cups, and King Solomon's soul grew strong once more, and he loved his wife as much as ever, and he opened his heart and said—

"I don't understand this 'liberty' quite yet, my royal love!"

"Why not?"

"Why, because since it became our law I have been obliged to do so many things I don't like."

King Solomon's wife laughed behind her sleeve, but she said at last very gently,

"That's a pity, Solomon!"

"It's a *nuisance*!" cried the King.

"'Tis a nuisance, Solomon!"

Just then the door opened, and King Solomon's eldest son tore into the room. His youthful eye shone bright with enthusiastic fervour, whilst his cheeks were flushed with excitement. In his hand he flourished about an empty scabbard, and on his head he wore a pyramidal-shaped covering.

"Father," he exclaimed, exultingly, "congratulate your fortunate offspring!—I went to look for you at the foot of the mountains. You were not there yourself, but I found a treasure worth a thousand kings!"

"What is it?" cried mamma; and, "What is it?" cried papa; and all the brothers and sisters came tumbling into the room, and asked, "What is it?"

"Get out of your chair, old gentleman, and let me sit down, and I'll tell you all about it," remarked King Solomon's eldest son.

"Jerry!" . . . exclaimed the King, and paused for breath.

"Are you mad?" vociferated the Queen, dragging her son forcibly away.

"Offer no restraint to my person, madam!" observed the hopeful youth. "By your violence I perceive you are still lying in darkness.—The reign of physical force is over, the reign of moral power takes its place. As I returned home from the mountains, I met the three illustrious Sages, and it was from them I learnt the value of my prize. They—yes!—they it was who told me I had found the Cap of Liberty, and might now go forth and conquer and rule the world!"

And again the empty scabbard was made to perform some warlike

flourishes in the air, and the embryo conqueror of the world danced wildly round the room.

But King Solomon's wife dashed after him, and catching him during the gyration of a magnificent pirouette, she set the reign of moral power at defiance by prostrating her son on the floor, and snatching the Cap of Liberty from his head.

And—"Jerry!"—she exclaimed, in a voice that meant to be obeyed,—"Before you and your papa change places, I intend to know what sort of a thing a Cap of Liberty is."

And thereupon King Solomon's wife sat down, and turned it round in her hands. And she turned it up, and she turned it down;—and she turned it backwards, and she turned it forwards;—and she looked at it outside, and she looked at it inside;—and then she fell back on the floor in a fit of hysterical laughter.

8.

Then King Solomon called out for sedatives, stimulants, restoratives, carminatives, and all the contents of the medicine chest. But before anything could be fetched, the Queen revived, exclaiming, "Conquer the world indeed!—Cap of Liberty forsooth!—You good-for-nothing Jerry, to go and pick up poor papa's crown and make such a figure of fun of it! Cap of Liberty indeed!" persisted her Majesty. "It's as well you should all know!—Look here!"—And the Queen dived her hand inside the cap and turned it back again as people do the foot of a stocking, and out came King Solomon's crown!

"Yes! now you all see, I hope"—observed the Queen, with a sneer—"that a Cap of Liberty is nothing in the world but a crown turned inside out and put on topsy-turvy!"

Then King Solomon's wife got up, and took the crochet-cap off her husband's head, and put on his crown once more; and the King rubbed his hands for joy, and then rang the bell, and ordered the Three Wise Men of Gotham—for fourteen months' imprisonment and hard labour—to the treadmill.

* * * * *

9.

Time, the universal eater-up of all things, is just now finishing the third course of this somewhat curious composition!

*"The tale is done! I linger with you yet,
This moment, yet a moment to prolong,
Ere with the closing book you shall forget —
At once the theme, the minstrel, and the song :"*



i.e., the Three Wise Men of Gotham, the great idea, and the historian thereof.

Youthful reader! is there any chord in your bosom which vibrates

to my touch?—Do you not feel that there gathers a soft mellow tone of evening sentiment around the end of *any*-thing? Yea! even around the end of "astonishing the Browns?" And yet, my dear young friends (as your Pastor is wont to call you), what is the end of all things but the beginning of something else? And so, by a transposition of that truism, was not the Beginning of the world itself the End of Chaos?—And is not this one of the many ways in which the old saying, "extremes meet," verifies itself?

Again,—“It is not without reason,” observed Mephistopheles to Faüst, “that a fried sausage has two ends.”—(Poor consolation, by-the-by, to the Doctor, when the evil spirit announced to him that the day of fun was over, and the day of punishment was close at hand!)—And what were these two ends but the beginning end, and the end end? In other words, there was an end of the beginning, and there came a beginning of the end.

And even so is it with this tale. There *was* a beginning end—and now the end end approaches. And so has this fried sausage of a lucubration also its two indispensable ends.

And though there is something confusing in the notion of two ends to anything—yet this is nothing to that strange anomaly of possibility known only to milliners and bow-makers,—a short end, and a long one.

“Would you like the ends long or short, madam?” inquires the Louis-Quatorze-rigged demoiselle, as with archiepiscopal importance, and judicial gravity, she holds up the tempting ribbon and scissors in suspense.

“*Short* ends, if you please, Mam’selle Victorine—the ribbon is so expensive.” And Mam’selle Victorine curls her delicate lips with a fine disdain as she cuts off the niggardly short ends with her Atroposian shears.

And now, my dear, dear readers, I may ask you—as Mam’selle Victorine does her customers—“Would you like the ends long or short?”

The *short* end is to be found at the conclusion of that chapter that leaves the Three Wise Men working at the treadmill. The *long* end will carry you into a field of conjecture as to the after-history of those remarkable Sages; for, like everything else, the fourteen months’ term came to an end at last, and that end proved to be only the beginning of something else!

10.

You should have seen the Three Wise Men in the House of Correction! How they kicked at the jailer, when he forced upon them those glorious symbols of Equality—uniformity of diet, and equal uniformity of costume! How they tussled with the barber, when he vowed that in a prison all beards were shaved one length! How they sulked in the enjoyment of Fraternity amidst knaves and fools of every degree, from blood-heat down to zero! How, in short, the realization of their views in the prison worked them more annoyance than the non-realization of them outside. But the theory that can stand the test of practical application is the black swan of philosophy.

Once more :—

"What *became* of the Three Wise Men, papa, when the horrid fourteen months were over? Did they go to sea again in a bowl?"

"They were at sea all their lives, my dear"—murmured mamma with a smile.

"Oh, mamma, mamma! why do you try to keep up your dignity by talking such obscure nonsense?"

"Never mind, my little dears; you and I will puzzle it out. Come near, and I will whisper to you a great secret. Did you ever hear of the 'Happy Family'?"

"Do you mean *ours*?" asks a bonny bairn with a huge benevolence bump, and a smile that melts his whole face into liquid love.

"No, my darling boy, not yours—I mean the Happy Family in a age in London."

"In a *cage*!—why are they in a cage?"

"Why?—Oh—why—why—somehow they cannot be the Happy Family except in a cage, my dear. There is a pretty picture of them in a little book by Lord Brougham. There you see a *happy* tom-cat sitting bolt upright, with a *happy* sparrow perched on his head, and a starling standing on his back; whilst an innocent kitten in the corner is stretching out its paw for a juvenile rat to lick. Behind, sits a judge-like owl, smiling doubtless at the gambols of two pretty mice in front of him; whilst the gentle-minded hawk does not even so much as cast a covetous eye on the turtle-doves who are cooing at his feet. Not only the sixth, but the tenth commandment rigidly observed—'*The weak without fear,*' observes Lord Brougham, in a flight of poetic inspiration, '*and the strong without the desire to injure.*' In

short, the 'Happy Family' is—as nearly as this wicked world admits of—a fabulous exemplification of the great idea——*in a cage*. In a cage, observe!—in a cage!—but still the great idea, *though* in a cage."

"I wonder why the cat doesn't eat the mouse," muses a younger child.

"Because she can't," is the answer.

"I wonder how it's managed," remarks an elder one.

That is the secret, my little dears. Lord Brougham says, "*a proper education*;" but the Three Wise Men knew better! To the glorious object of realizing the great idea among brutes,—since rational creatures rejected it,—they devoted the last years of their valuable lives.

Baffled in the practical application of their theory to the Universe, it was some consolation to them to witness the development of it in a cage!

What mankind could not be *reasoned* into, animals could be *forced* into; and the application of tyrannical power effected at last, in a cage in Trafalgar Square, that condition of things which in our childish days we were taught to look forward to as a far-off millennial miracle!

But the careful extraction of growing teeth—the judicious clipping of claws—cramming with food until the appetite of hunger has turned into sickly cloy,—and, above all, the daily "*exhibition*" of opium, go far towards the amelioration of the species! It was no wonder that both body and mind were exhausted, when the Three Wise Men had accomplished their exalted, but contradictory task. It was no wonder that their lamps of life blew out with a sudden gust of confusion, when, having completed their object, they recollected that the "equality and fraternity" effected by tyrannical power among a set of caged slaves was the only type they could bequeath to posterity of THE GREAT IDEA!

It is whispered that, with a dying sigh, the last Wise Man admitted, that both among brutes and men a *perfect* scheme of "Liberty, Equality, and Fraternity" can only be carried out by unnatural means; for experience had taught him they were quite against "THE NATURE OF THE BEASTS."



CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER VIII.



THE day fixed for the school feast came very quickly, but not before all the dolls were dressed, and all the cardboard and coloured paper bought in Dollington had been converted into boxes of all sorts of shapes, and filled with sugarplums and chocolate. Yes, when Saturday came, everything was ready to be packed and taken up to the village, and the children were all impatience to start. The tree, which had been very carefully selected by a committee of the whole house, was sent off before breakfast in a cart piled high with evergreens; and when Fanny Arnott and the children drove over in the pony carriage with the dolls and other toys rather later in the morning, it was already set up in the schoolroom, where it looked stately and tall enough to satisfy even Jack, who had been rather inclined to think it very shabby of the gardener not to dig up the tree of his particular choice—which happened to be one that everybody else and the yard measure agreed was about three feet too tall for the room, and would have to be accommodated, if placed there at all, by means of a hole in the ceiling. Jack's conviction was not to be shaken by the testimony of the most careful measurements, and when he came into the schoolroom he was quite prepared to see the smaller tree that had been decided on, looking exceedingly dwarfish and insignificant. However, seeing is said to be believing, and it was impossible not to be satisfied with a fir-tree of which the leader stopped only two feet short of the ceiling, of which every branch was straight and green, and which reminded Mrs. Morris of the cedars of Lebanon. As Mrs. Morris was a model old woman, I think the reader ought to be introduced to her. She was the mother of the schoolmaster, and she lived at the school-house, "to take care of her *boy* and look after the little ones a bit." It would be difficult to say whether she was most proud of her "*boy*," or her *boy* most proud of his mother. Any way they were both very happily proud of one another, and not without reason. The young Vernons had first made Mrs. Morris's acquaintance a very few days after they came to settle at the Hall, and the manner of their introduction had

been this. They had been overtaken in the village by a sudden violent storm of wind and rain, and had taken shelter under the gabled porch of the school-house. At first, they had been too shy to venture within the door; but the rain continuing, their sense of discomfort had grown



stronger than their scruples, and they had boldly knocked, and been admitted by a tall, upright old lady, with a bright complexion and snow-white hair, and a most motherly and benevolent countenance.

"We were caught in the rain without umbrellas," Maud had said, "and we thought perhaps we might take shelter here."

"Of course you shall take shelter here, my dears. Come to the fire and dry yourselves at once. Dear! dear! how like your father you be!"

This last remark had been addressed to Harry, who, much surprised, had inquired how Mrs. Morris came to know who he was, and what his father was like; upon which it had come out that Mrs. Morris had been kitchen-maid at the Hall in those old days when Colonel Vernon had stayed there as a schoolboy. This was a delightful discovery. It is so difficult to realize that such very grown-up people as one's own father and mother were ever boys and girls, and above all, sometimes naughty, that when one does get hold of somebody who can testify from personal recollection to these things having been, it is an opportunity to be made the most of. So at least thought the Vernon children, and from that day forth they were very frequent visitors in Mrs. Morris's kitchen, which they agreed with her in thinking a more snug and homelike place than the smart but cold-looking parlour. Mrs. Morris had a comfortable contrivance in her kitchen which, though probably familiar to most English children, was, to our young Indians, a delightful novelty, namely, a curtain so hung that, when drawn, it enclosed a large semicircular space in front of the wide hearth. Within this charmed circle it was their delight to gather, and Mrs. Morris's delight to receive them, and tell over and over again all that she could remember about Colonel Vernon's boyish days—of his larks and of his scrapes, of his feats of cricket, football and horsemanship, of the prizes he brought from school, and of the distinction she had always been sure he would achieve; and not least often of how, when she left her place at the Hall to get married, he had given her a pretty gold brooch, bought out of his own pocket-money; and at this part of her narrative Mrs. Morris would generally take the little brooch out of its soft wadding bed in her desk, and hand it round for admiration. The first time that the children went to see Mrs. Morris after their father's death, they had wondered whether she would discontinue her story-telling, and they had been glad to find that she did not. I think she guessed at the feeling in their minds, for she said suddenly, as they all sat looking sadly into the fire, "Well, well, we must till talk about the old days. Remembering is all you have got left now,

and you must have as much of that as you can." And so she had gone on telling the old stories, though not with the old merriment, and "Hearing about papa" had become almost a religious ceremony, so gravely and tenderly did the old woman relate her anecdotes, and so reverently did the children listen. She would tell them, too, the story of her own life—of her marriage to a young thriving carpenter in the village; of the three happy years that had followed; of the death of her "man;" of her hard struggle to support herself and the little one she was left with; of all the beauty and excellence of the little one; of her first sending him to school, and of the almost miraculous progress he had made there; of the interest the then rector had taken in him, which had led to his being sent to a large training-school for teachers; of all the wonderful book-learning he had acquired there, and of how, when the time came for him to leave, it happened that a new schoolmaster was wanted at Everton, and the rector and all the gentlefolks had said that no one could be more fit for the place than Robert Morris. All these things Mrs. Morris was never tired of telling while she could get willing listeners.

To-day, however, she was far too busy for story-telling, for to her share fell all the preparations for the feeding part of the evening's entertainment. There were mountains of cake to be cut up, and pounds and pounds of butter, besides many pots of jam, to be spread on a large batch of bread baked in her own oven. Besides which, much scrubbing was necessary to bring the schoolrooms and passages up to Mrs. Morris's standard of feast-day cleanliness; and, had she not been the best-tempered as well as the cleanest of women, she could not have borne as patiently as she did to see the floors she had scoured only that morning strewed with leaves and stained with berry-juice by the invading army of decorators from the Hall. But perhaps, after all, it would have been difficult to treat such a good-humoured laughing army as an enemy.

"Really, Mrs. Morris," said Fanny Arnott, "it makes me quite unhappy to be making such a litter on the floor after you have taken so much trouble to clean it. I shall have to borrow one of your big serge aprons and scrub the room myself, as soon as our decorations are finished."

"I expect," answered Mr. Mildmay, "by the time our decorations are finished you will be tired out, and more ready to accept my

invitation to tea at the Rectory than to go down on your knees with a scouring-flannel and a pail full of soapsuds. What do you say, Maud—don't you think you had all better come to tea with me when work is over?"

"I say yes, certainly, if Aunt Fanny will say 'yes,' too. Do come, Aunt Fanny. It is the nicest thing in the world having tea at Cousin Frank's."

"In that case I say 'yes, certainly,' for I should very much like to experience the nicest thing in the world."

"You've not been inside his house at all yet, have you?"

"No."

"And you haven't seen his dogs, or his books, or his pictures, or any of his things?"

"No, I am in a state of most complete and lamentable ignorance about Mr. Mildmay's house and property."

"These children have agreed to think, Miss Arnott, that everything belonging to me is perfect, and I hear all my possessions and all my arrangements so much praised that I begin to get quite conceited. So if you find me doing the honours in a very boastful manner, please be kind enough to bear in mind that it is your own nephews and nieces who have spoiled me.—There, will that do, do you think?" While he spoke, Mr. Mildmay had been nailing up a festoon of holly and ivy.

"Oh! don't you think it is crooked?" said Fanny; "it seems to me to be a good deal higher at one end than at the other."

"You are right, and to tell the truth I more than half suspected it was crooked all the time I was putting it up; but the right point was almost beyond my reach, and instead of getting steps to stand on, I weakly persuaded myself that I could manage well enough without. Now, you see, it must all come down."

"All haste, no speed," said Harry, oracularly.

"Shall I get you a stool, Cousin Frank?" asked Jack.

"Thank you, I wish you would; but stay—there is a box in the corner that will do as well. I will help you to carry it across the room."

In lifting the box, which was rather heavy, Jack managed to catch hold of the lid and hitch it up, so that the contents of the box were for a moment disclosed. Something that looked like a red cloak covered with snowflakes peeped out.

"Why, what have we here?" asked Mr. Mildmay.

"Oh, you mustn't ask; it's a secret," cried everybody at once.

"A secret! but as you have let the cat half out of the bag, I think you might as well let it quite out."

But "No, no, no," was the unanimous answer, and Mabel added, "You shall not be allowed to know any more, and it is very naughty of you to have seen as much as you have seen."

"Well, really, it is rather hard that, besides having to suffer, for I know not how long, the tortures of ungratified curiosity, I am to be scolded for stumbling, through no fault of my own, on half a discovery."

"I don't think you can quite fairly say that it was through no fault of your own, Cousin Frank," said Maud; "for if you had not been too lazy to fetch yourself the steps before putting up that wreath you would probably not have put it up crooked, and you would not have taken it down again, and you would not have meddled with the box."

"I stand reproved," said Cousin Frank, humbly. "I will bear my punishment with resignation. But may I not be told how much longer this beautiful garment, which, little as I deserve it, I cannot help hoping is a new coat for myself, is to remain wrapped in mystery. Shall I ever know what and whose it is, and if so, when?" Mr. Mildmay looked so absurdly humble and curious and imploring, that they all laughed heartily at him.

"I think," said Fanny, "there can be no harm in telling him that he will know the secret this evening before the tree is stripped."

Mr. Mildmay thought he could be tolerably patient till then; and so, I hope, can the reader.

They worked on steadily till four o'clock, stopping only for a few minutes in the middle of the day to eat a sort of picnic luncheon among the evergreens, and by that time the work of decoration was completed. The walls of both schoolrooms were hung round with graceful festoons of evergreens and paper flowers, all the toys were hung upon the tree, and all the little wax tapers had been induced to stand upright; and Mrs. Morris, with pattens on her feet and her gown tucked up under an extensive apron, was already beginning to clean up, assisted by her good-natured maid-of-all-work.

They were all well satisfied with their day's work, and, though no one would own to being tired, every one confessed to having a very good appetite and to looking forward with no small pleasure to a snug tea at the Rectory.

CHAPTER IX.

It was very tempting, after such a hard day's work, to linger in Mr Mildmay's pleasant little house drinking tea over the fire; but the temptation had to be resisted, for the school-children's tea—next to the tree itself the greatest event of the day—was to come off at five, and of course our party must be on the spot to receive the very first comers. So it was only possible to introduce Aunt Fanny to a very small proportion of the beauties and marvels of the Rectory on that afternoon.

The boys' and the girls' schoolrooms opened one into the other—they were, in fact, one large room divided into two by a partition that consisted of a wide expanse of green curtain in the middle, with a few feet of lath and plaster on either side of it. The tea was prepared in the boys' room; that of the girls being given up to the Christmas-tree.

When our party came back from the Rectory the boys' schoolroom presented a very cheerful appearance. A bright fire, carefully protected by a high wire fender, was burning at one end of the room, and over it hung a white banner, bidding all comers "Welcome," in the true Christmas language of scarlet holly berries; the wreaths of evergreens hung against the walls in festoons, which the most mathematical eye might have beheld with pleasure, so faultlessly regular were the intervals at which they were suspended, and crescents of lighted candles projected from the walls and shed their light on two long tables, laden with good things, that extended from one end of the room to the other.

"Well done, Mrs. Morris," said Fanny Arnott, as she glanced approvingly round; "who would believe that it is scarcely an hour since we were working here in a perfect maze of evergreens, and crushing holly berries into the floor at every step? You must have swept with a magic broom."

"Ah, miss, there's no magic like the magic of a stout arm and a good will; and if my arm ain't as stout as it was some thirty years

ago, why Jeanie's, there, is strong enough to make up for it; and I don't think we are either of us wanting for good will."

Jeanie smiled shyly at being thus brought into notice.

"I'm sure I'm very much obliged to you, Mrs. Morris, and to you too, Jeanie," said Frank Mildmay; "and I think we must move a vote of thanks to you both before the evening is over, if not have you carried in triumph round the room."

Mrs. Morris thought this the best joke she had ever heard; but when Harry and Jack pretended to be going to carry out their cousin's suggestion, she became seriously alarmed, and would have fled to her room had not Mr. Mildmay assured her that no such uncomfortable honour should be forced upon her against her will.

Then followed a little dispute between Fanny and Mrs. Morris. It came out that the two tables had been destined one for the boys and one for the girls; than which Fanny declared she had never heard of a more abominable arrangement. "Why should the boys and girls be separated?" she asked. Mrs. Morris could not give any very definite reason. "Somehow it seemed more fitting." But Fanny could not see this, and she appealed to her nephews and nieces to say how they would like such arrangements to be made with regard to their doings. They all supported her; so did Mr. Mildmay, and Mrs. Morris gave in.

"Well, miss, have it your own way; I'm sure you ought to know best; as I was saying to Miss Maud this afternoon, you seem to understand everything, and you've such a pleasant way with you that there's no saying no to anything you've set your heart on."

So the boys and girls, who, by this time, were arriving, as Jeanie said, "faster than any one could count 'em," were allowed to sit down to their tea together, and I never heard that their appetites were spoiled, or that their tea disagreed with them in consequence.

When, after half an hour's steady work at levelling mountains of cake and bread and butter, boys and girls began to show signs of flagging, and offers of more cake and tea were met with shakes of the head and "No, thank you," Mr. Mildmay proposed that he and the schoolmaster and Harry should go into the other room and light the tree while Fanny and Maud and Mabel stayed behind to entertain the children till the great sight of the evening should be ready, but Harry replied that he could not possibly help at the lighting—"Can I, Aunt Fanny?"

"No, I do not think you can; neither do I think that I can remain here to amuse the children; so please think of some plan by which you can do without Harry and me, Mr. Mildmay," and both Fanny and Harry looked very mysterious.

"More secrets; this is really too bad," said Mr. Mildmay; "and I really don't know how to do without you."

At this moment Mrs. Vernon arrived, and he turned to her for sympathy, if not assistance. "I am really very hardly used. At every corner I come upon some mystery; and the hardest part of it all is that the conspirators expect me to fall into their plans, and help to keep myself in the dark. I have just asked Harry to help me light the tree, and Miss Arnott to amuse our guests, and they have both refused flatly, on account of some mysterious business connected, I believe, with a red dressing-gown or hunting coat, but which, neither of them will explain to me. Are you in the secret?"

"Indeed, I am as much in the dark as yourself, and have really more cause to complain than you have, for the scarlet dressing-gown (I happen to know that it is a dressing-gown) was borrowed from me without any explanation being vouchsafed as to what it was wanted for. But though I can't help you to unravel the mystery, cannot I help you in a more practical way by taking Fanny's place here while she carries on her plottings and dark conspiracies with Mrs. Morris and Harry? Look at them! it is really alarming! one half expects to be blown up by gunpowder."

For Fanny Arnott and Harry had retired into a corner with Mrs. Morris, and were engaged in earnest confabulation. As Mrs. Vernon finished speaking, Fanny was overheard to say, "And you will ask Mr. Morris, when the bell rings, to draw them all up in rows down the sides of the room, leaving a wide clear passage up the middle;" and Mrs. Morris had answered, "Yes, miss, I'll remember."

"Take care, take care," said Frank Mildmay, "you are observed—rows of people down the sides of the room, a clear space in the middle, and a scarlet dressing-gown! Almost evidence enough to convict you of high treason. But while you have been plotting, Mrs. Vernon has undertaken to amuse everybody till the tree is lighted, which will be some time to-morrow morning if I don't make haste. Come, Mr. Morris, let us begin at once." And Mr. Mildmay and the schoolmaster disappeared through the curtain, Fanny Arnott and

Harry going out of the room at the same time by the door that led to Mrs. Morris's parlour.

As we can guess pretty well how the tree was lighted, and as Fanny Arnott shut the door after her with a decision that seemed to forbid entrance even to that privileged person the author, from whom, as a rule, nothing is kept secret, I think we had better remain in the boys' schoolroom, and see how Mrs. Vernon will amuse the rather formidable party left on her hands.

During the conversation I have just related, the energetic Jeanie, assisted by Maud, Jack, and Mabel, had cleared away the tea-things and pushed the tables and benches up against the wall, so that there was now ample space in the middle of the room in which to play at games if only any one could have thought of a game to play at.

"What shall we do with them, mamma?" said Maud.

"I really don't know, my dear; you ought to know of plenty of games."

"But I can't think of *one* just at this moment. Oh, dear! oh dear!" And Maud looked sadly puzzled.

"Blind man's buff," suggested Jack.

"There are too many," answered Maud.

"Hunt the slipper, then."

"Too many again."

"Post."

"They are too young."

"Not all," said Mrs. Vernon; "why not divide? Half might play at post, and half at some other game."

"It would take so long to arrange," said Maud, "that it would be time to leave off before we had begun. What *shall* we do?"

"You sing, mamma."

It was a bold suggestion, and it came from Mabel. Mrs. Vernon had not sung a single song since her husband's death; but in old days listening to their mother's singing had been one of the greatest and most frequent pleasures that the children knew.

Maud and Jack looked up wonderingly. Would their mother sing? She had done many things since Aunt Fanny had been with them that she had seemed before to have given up for ever. After a moment's hesitation Mrs. Vernon answered quietly:

"I will sing with pleasure, if you will all like it."

Maud answered for everybody that they would like nothing better. "What shall I sing?"

"*'I once had a little doll, dears,'*" suggested Mabel.

And Mrs. Vernon sang the song, at first tremulously, but soon in a clear, sweet, steady voice, that enchanted all her audience. When she ended there was a great clapping of little hands, and, when she asked what they would like to do next, many little voices cried, "Another song!" "Please, another song, that was so pretty." So Mrs. Vernon sang a second song, and was just going to begin a third, when Mr. Mildmay came in, and announced that the tree was ready; an announcement that created so much excitement that there was some difficulty in restraining the eager children from breaking through the curtain to see the wonderful tree.

"Are Miss Arnott and Harry still plotting in a secret chamber?" asked Frank Mildmay.

"Miss Arnott is neither plotting, nor is she in a secret chamber; she is trying to make her way through this crowded doorway," answered Fanny's own voice from the door, and the crowd of children made way for her to pass.

"And Harry?"

"It is doubtful whether we shall see Harry again this evening."

"More mystery!"

"In five minutes you will know all about it."

A bell rang, and Fanny looked at Mr. Morris. Immediately he began marshalling all the company down the sides of the room. Then the green curtain was drawn aside, and the beautiful tree was discovered in all the glory of its twinkling waxlights. The children gave a cry of delight, and a few, in their eagerness to approach nearer to the dazzling object, broke from the ranks, soon, however, to be recalled by the authoritative voice of Mr. Morris.

"March in order into the next room, and separate at the entrance, the boys going to the left, the girls to the right."

The band of children advanced with a promptness and precision that were worthy of a Prussian regiment. Then there was a pause; the school-children, with wide-open eyes of wonder and delight, lined the two sides of the room, while our party gathered round the tree, and expressed their satisfaction with the result of their work.

"But where is Harry?" asked Mr. Mildmay; "he ought not to have

missed the first sight of the tree. It was worth a good deal to see the delight of the little ones."

"Yes, indeed," said Mrs. Vernon; "I wonder what the boy is doing."

Before any one could answer, a wonderful thing took place. Suddenly a strange wild figure of an old man, with a long white beard—just like Father Christmas in a German story-book—appeared in the doorway. He wore a long scarlet robe, thickly sprinkled with snowflakes, and a tall fur hat, out of the top of which grew a fir-tree, with a robin-redbreast perched atop. He darted through the door of the boys' schoolroom, crossed it with a gliding movement that was more like skating than either walking or running, dashed through the curtained archway, and passed between the two rows of astonished children straight up to the Christmas-tree. It was a startling apparition, and some of the very little children were inclined to be rather frightened, and to cry a little, till they saw that it was considered good fun by the majority, when they too laughed and clapped their hands.

"There, Cousin Frank," said Maud, "what do you think about the secret now? Was it not worth a little patience?"

"I think it is a wonderful success, only I cannot help being sorry for Harry, he is losing all the fun."

"Cousin Frank," expostulated Maud, "as if you didn't know!"

"Don't tell him, don't tell him," whispered innocent Mabel; "he hasn't found it out yet. What fun!"

"But," said Fanny, "I think Father Christmas looks as if he had something to say."

She was right. As soon as silence was restored, Father Christmas, who had been standing by the tree, shaking his shaggy head backwards and forwards in a very comical manner, began to speak, and this is what he said:

"I come from realms of ice and snow
To share your Christmas joys;
I scatter crackers as I go,
For all good girls and boys."

And then he nodded his head violently, and out of the crown of his furry hat came tumbling a great quantity of crackers, which the children did not need much encouragement to set them scrambling for,

while Father Christmas skated round the room at a wonderful pace, coming back, however, to his place under the tree.

"I come when bleak December comes,
With fog and hoar frost chill;
I bring you cakes and sugarplums—
Come, quick your pockets fill."

And this time Father Christmas thrust both hands into a large bag-apron he wore in front of him, and brought them out again full of cakes and sugarplums, which he flung right and left among the children.

"And though I may not with you bide,
I wish you best of cheer
At each successive Christmastide
And every glad New Year."

Then Father Christmas skated round and round the room again amid shouts of delight and admiration, and at last dashed through the curtains and vanished. "Will he come back?" "I hope he'll come back," said many little voices; but Father Christmas did not reappear, for Harry found the skates tiring, and the heavy garments too hot to pass the evening in with pleasure. When he came back to the room in his own clothes he found himself quite a hero. Nothing so wonderful or clever as this performance of his had ever been seen at Everton school before; and when the schoolmaster proposed that three cheers should be given for Father Christmas, there were not many lungs idle.

What created most astonishment was the skating.

"How did you manage to skate on the floor?" asked Mr. Mildmay, for, to the great delight of the conspirators, indoor skates turned out to be as great a mystery to him as to the school-children. Harry fetched the skates, and exhibited them, and it was explained that his aunt had given them to him as a Christmas present, but that as it had occurred to her, even before giving them to him, that they might be turned to this use, they had been kept as a great secret, known at first only to Aunt Fanny and himself, but confided this morning to his brother and sisters.

"I think we ought to begin to strip the tree, and distribute the presents," said Mrs. Vernon.

"Yes," replied Fanny, "the candles are burning very low. Here are the tickets. Shall Mabel begin to hand them round?"

Mabel handed round the tickets, and the rest of the party, armed with scissors and knives, fell upon the beautiful tree, and began to rob it of its ornaments. When every child had drawn a number—and not every child only; for all the grown-ups were made to draw as well—Mr. Mildmay began calling over the numbers on the presents, and, as each number was called, the owner of the corresponding ticket came up to claim his or her share of the spoil. Unfortunately, or perhaps I should say fortunately, as the omission was the cause of a great deal of merriment, no precautions had been taken to secure boys and girls receiving such toys as were specially suitable to their respective sizes. Great was the amusement, for instance, when Dick Rands, the roughest lad in the school, received a dainty little fair-haired doll, dressed in an exquisite ball-gown of white tarlatan and satin bows, especially as he stoutly refused to exchange it for some more manly plaything. He afterwards confided to Mrs. Vernon—herself the recipient of a pop-gun, that she had vainly begged him to accept, either in addition to or in exchange for the doll—that he intended to give his doll to a little sister at home, who, being lame, could not get to school, either for lessons or treats.

But though Dick Rands would not agree to an exchange, many others did, and bartering went on very briskly. I believe, at last, everybody got something more or less suitable, except Mr. Mildmay himself, to whose lot fell a tiny thimble that would just be persuaded to lodge on the tip of his little finger, with which, however, he refused to part, chiefly, I believe, because he had reason to suspect that his getting this tiny thimble was the result of a deep plot of Mabel's.

The pleasant evening came to an end at last. The last wax-light went out upon the tree, little boys and girls began to yawn, jokes seemed not so good as they had been an hour ago, and fathers and mothers came to fetch away their children. By half-past eight all the school-children were gone, and our party stood alone by the now desolate tree. They lingered a few minutes to "talk it over" and congratulate one another upon the success of the entertainment, and then, wishing good-night to Mrs. Morris and her son, they prepared to go home. But Mr. Mildmay protested. Supper was waiting for the whole party at his house, and he would not dream of allowing them to return to the Hall till they had eaten their share of it. Mrs. Vernon made faint objections, but they were overruled, and Mr. Mildmay carried his point.

Supper is perhaps, of all meals, the most sociable, and when, as was the case with our present party, it is an irregularity—a something not coming into the routine of everyday life, but only occurring on great occasions—it is especially delightful. So thought Harry. “I say, this is jolly,” said he, as they sat down to the table; “eggs and bacon, cold chicken, and veal pie! I’m uncommonly glad we didn’t go straight home.”

“Yes, I think we did well to give in,” said Mrs. Vernon.

Though they did not all express their appreciation of Mr. Mildmay’s good things with the same open delight that Harry did, they all showed in a practical way that they agreed with him. Knives and forks were plied very busily, and tongues were not idle either. There was much to talk about; all the incidents of the day, the apprehensions of failure, and the triumphant success that made them wonder at having had any doubts, were gone over. Then there was the play, which might now be allowed to occupy the foreground of their minds, from which it had often, during the last week, tried rudely to push away the school feast. Much had already been done in the way of preparation, parts had been learnt and dresses planned, but much more yet remained to be done in the way of scene-painting, rehearsing, and making costumes. Frank Mildmay promised to come over to tea almost every evening till the great night itself, to take part in the rehearsals and help in the preparations generally; a promise that gave universal satisfaction.

Time passed quickly, and when Mrs. Vernon looked at her watch and cried out “Half-past ten!” the announcement was received with general incredulity. But the watch was positive, and Mrs. Vernon would hear of no more delays; so hats and cloaks were scrambled into with all possible haste, Mr. Mildmay packed his guests comfortably into the waggonette, last good-nights were said, and a very merry party drove away under a blue starlit sky. Mabel slept soundly all the way home, waking up when the carriage stopped at the lodge gate to ask suddenly whether Aunt Fanny did not think that the Christmas-tree must have seemed like Heaven to the dolls; upon which Fanny looked amused, and Mabel got very red, and took care to stop her aunt’s mouth with kisses lest she should tell the others.



ARAB TENTS.

I AM able to knit quite nicely, now, Aunt," said Charlie, one day; "look what a long piece I have done this morning! But I think," added he, with a roguish smile, "that I should get on better still if you would talk a little."

"That means, I suppose," replied his Aunt, "that I am requested to imagine myself in the desert, and describe the Arab tents to you. Is that what you want, Charlie?"

"Yes, please, Aunt Emma. You know you were too busy to do so yesterday, but if you have time now I should like it so much, and as the others will not come home for an hour or two, there will be nothing to disturb us."

"Very well, I will begin. I told you about our own way of travelling, but I did not say anything about our visit to one of the Arab sheikhs. You know that hospitality is accounted by the Arabs the most sacred of obligations; to refuse it if demanded even by an enemy would be disgraceful, and to eat with a person is considered a decided mark of friendship. Travellers wandering in the great Arabian desert have often put the feelings of Bedouins to the test by offering them bread and salt: if they refuse it they are determined to be enemies, but if they eat it they may safely be counted upon as allies. We did not need to try any such experiment, as the Arabs who accompanied us had agreed to take us in safety a certain distance for a certain reward; but when we came near to the tents of their tribe they naturally expected us to visit them, and we, for our parts, were most anxious to do so.

"The first encampment we reached was not far from Mount Sinai; we had been wandering amongst mountains all the morning, and at mid-day entered a beautiful valley called Hashwa, shut in by abrupt precipices, above which towered the crags of Mount Serbál. In this valley were many old sont and tamarisk trees, and even actual gardens formed here and there, under the shelter of the rocks, walled in, and planted with palms, sont, and nabbuk trees. We sat down to eat our lunch under a fine old sont tree (I think I have told you before that the sont is a kind of acacia), the bark of which had evidently often been scored to obtain the much-prized gum; and here

we, for the first time, ate the fruit of the nabbuk, which looks like a tiny apple, but has a stone in the centre, and tastes rather like strawberry jam. After lunch, I walked on for some time; it was pleasant now and then to avoid the fatiguing step of the camel, and I never saw anything finer of its kind than the view at the head of the valley, Mount Serbál rising majestically, with its many craggy peaks, far above its neighbours, and at its base a fresh green date garden. We passed a large flock of goats and another of sheep, and also many young camels, and as our Arabs also met many men of their tribe, with whom they exchanged salutations by touching the hand and forehead, we looked out eagerly for the tents, which we knew must be somewhere at hand.

"We saw them presently, stretched in a line, close to a small rivulet, where our camels and their drivers joyfully quenched their thirst. Beside this stream grew tall reeds, and quite a large palm grove, as well as a thicket of tamarisk trees. 'On seeing us approach, the sheikh, who was the father of the young man under whose protection we were, and who was chief of three small tribes, those of Assaid, Howàra, and Leghàte, approached us with a salaam, and requested us to honour him with a visit. He was accompanied by another friendly sheikh, and they wore dresses of crimson Damascus silk. We dismounted, and were invited to enter the principal tent and seat ourselves on the carpet; the sheikhs sat down beside us, and a semicircle of Arabs soon squatted down opposite to us.

"The Arab calls his tent his house (*beit*); it is made of stuff woven from goats'-hair, and is generally black, though sometimes striped with white. This stuff will keep out the heaviest rain. The tent is supported by nine posts, three in the centre, and three at each end, so that it is about twice as wide as it is deep, and the three middle posts are about two feet higher than those at the ends, which only measure five feet. The front part of the tent is open, and it is divided into two apartments, one for the men, and the other for the women; a woollen cloth, fastened to the centre poles, forming the division. We could, of course, distinctly hear from behind this screen the preparations the women were making, grinding corn and baking bread. Coffee is always prepared in the presence of the guest, and it is done by roasting the berries in a sort of ladle, at a fire in front of the tent, pounding them with an iron bar, in a wooden mortar, and then boiling

the coffee in a metal pot. Perhaps you would not like the coffee, as it is rather thick and frothy, and has neither milk nor cream in it, but we considered it extremely good, and we did not dislike the cakes either. They are made in the following manner. In the first place, a wood fire is made, and reduced to embers as soon as possible; to these embers a quantity of camels' dung is added, which, when well ignited, gives out a very strong heat. While the fire is getting ready, the wheat or Indian corn has been ground and made into dough, by mixing the flour with water, in small wooden troughs or bowls, which the Arabs always carry with them. Do you recollect that when the Israelites left Egypt they carried their *kneading troughs* bound up in their clothes, upon their shoulders? I often fancied when I saw the Arabs preparing their food, that just so, probably, had the patriarchs managed. These women, were they not like Sarah with her three measures of meal, kneading it and making cakes upon the hearth? And the Sheikh was most anxious to *send one of his young men to his herd for a sheep or a goat*, but this we would not allow, as we had yet further to go that day, and could not afford time for a longer entertainment. But we ladies went into the women's tent to see the sheikh's wives; the wife of the chief sheikh kissed us, and we returned the salutation through her face-covering, which she did not remove. This is like a white muslin bag, in which the nose and chin are enveloped; it is a little ornamented with embroidery, and coins are sewn to it. Her head was covered by a black handkerchief, so arranged that one could only see her eyes and her hair, which was gathered up in a knot over her forehead, and looked most peculiar. Her dress was a wide gown of dark cotton, with a leather belt round her waist, and she wore, besides an infinity of bead necklaces, curious bracelets made of silver, leather, and coral, worked up together. The younger wives were dressed much in the same way, but their handkerchiefs were coloured, instead of black. I believe that, had they removed the face-covering, we should have found their lips tattooed, and have seen that they wore nose-rings. I afterwards saw other women with this singular adornment, which looks very odd to us, though it is perhaps not a bit more strange than an ear-ring, if you come to think of it; both are barbarous! In the women's tent, the cooking utensils, the butter and water skins, the provisions, and all the lumber generally, are kept, and the women do all the principal

labour; the men do little between meals but sleep and smoke their pipes.

"I should tell you how the bread is baked: when it has been flattened out into a large round cake upon a round iron plate, if the tent possesses such a commodity, or upon the skinny side of one of the men's sheep-skin cloaks, if no other bake-board is present, it is laid on the well-heated ground, the embers having been swept aside, and then covered completely with the hot ashes; there it remains for about ten minutes, when it is pulled out, tapped smartly with a stick to free it from dust, and then eaten with treacle, or used as an accompaniment to a dish of burgoul."

"What is 'burgoul,' Aunty?" said Charlie.

"Wheat which has been boiled with leaven, dried in the sun, and afterwards preserved for about a year, and then boiled with butter and oil. It forms, you may suppose, a greasy mess, but the Arabs are very fond of it. It is served in a bowl, and each man, dipping his right hand into it, makes up a ball about the size of a hen's egg, which he swallows! It does not look nice, this way of eating; as bad as the Neapolitans with their macaroni; but the Arabs always wash their hands first, while the Lazzaroni would think such a ceremony superfluous. After taking our coffee, making some little presents to the ladies, and thanking our hosts through an interpreter, we proceeded on our way, and on arriving at our camp for the night, which was not far off, we thought proper to return the compliment by presenting our young sheikh with a sheep, upon which he and his men were soon feasting merrily."

"Oh, tell me about it, Aunt Emma; do you mean to say that they killed the sheep and ate it directly?"

"Yes, indeed, about two hours would suffice for the whole business; they generally cook the sheep whole, covering it with ashes as they do the bread, and then they consume every portion of it, even the inside, and seem to enjoy it exceedingly. They very rarely get meat to eat—only on the occasion of some festivity; at other times they are content with burgoul, or rice, or dates and bread, or some other such simple fare. Yet the Arabs are very strong and hardy, and are capable of much endurance, and can walk at a speed and for a length of time that would much astonish an Englishman. They are also, as far as we were able to see, merry, good-humoured fellows. The camels are their

most valuable possessions; they live to a great age—as much as forty years—although they are comparatively useless after five-and-twenty. The hair of the camel is made into clothing; it is plucked every year just about the time when it would naturally be shed, and each camel yields about two pounds of it. But the great advantage of the camel is, as you know, the length of time it can subsist without water, which is an invaluable quality in the thirsty deserts over which the Bedouins range. We had desired to take a riding-horse with us, but when we found that we should have had to add two camels to our number, to carry water for the horse, we gave up the idea. Water is the thing most to be considered in a desert journey; the chance of finding it regulates all the other arrangements; your journeys are long or short, according to the places where water is found, and should a spring be unexpectedly dried up, or a tank exhausted, much distress will often ensue, though of course you always endeavour to keep your barrels replenished, for fear of accident. You remember the frequent mention of wells in the Old Testament, and the strife they sometimes occasioned among the herdsmen. These scenes occur at this very day. We have come upon a well where thirty or forty camels, young and old, were being watered, and such a clamour going on—especially when our Arabs wanted to come in for a share too. The water was drawn up in goat-skins, or sometimes in round baskets covered with goat-skin, and then distributed to the men and animals. Occasionally, but not often during our desert journey, there would be heavy rain. I remember one grand thunderstorm that occurred, when the lightning was so vivid, it almost seemed as if the tent was on fire, and the thunder rolled apparently just over our heads; but what was strangest of all was the roaring of a new-made torrent, where just before all had been parched and arid, and we found on starting again on our journey that the wadys were well filled with water. In some places it was quite deep, and the baggage camels made the crossing a matter of some difficulty as well as time. It was very droll to watch the proceedings of the different servants: Salvo, when he found his animal about to lie down, coolly removed his mattress and bolster, and abandoned him to the tender mercies of the Arabs; the cook, on the contrary, made the most strenuous exertions to get his unruly beast forward, pulling, beating, shouting, and looking most comical, while the active, intelligent little Mohammed got on without any fuss. At one of these

streams we met two Arabs of the Towara tribe ; one a handsome young sheikh, whose fine features were well set off by his under robe of brilliant scarlet cloth, black burnous, red and yellow kefich, and jet-black hair hanging down his back in glossy Grecian plaits. His countenance was open and pleasing, and I took a fancy to him at once. The other was handsome too, but fierce-looking. Both had guns in leather cases slung behind them, and other arms in their girdles and saddle-bags ; they assisted us at the ford, and came on with us to our camping ground, where they helped to pitch the tents.


“ When the Arabs of our tribe had conducted us for a certain distance, they were obliged to leave us, and hand us over to another set, who would agree to see us safely through that part of the desert which was under their control. At each change, of course, a fresh bargain was made, not without much bustle and altercation. Not only the parties concerned, but their friends and neighbours, would gather round, and hours would elapse before the affair could be concluded. Then the next morning it was worth anything to see Vincenzo trying to organize a fresh start. We had risen probably at an early hour, and breakfasted in the open air, and all would be packed and ready. On each side of us might be seen a group of camels, those of the returning Arabs and those of our new conductors, but not a sign of a move. No hand lifted to the luggage, but some Arabs quietly sitting round their fires. Then a dispute would arise between our former sheikh and a man of the new tribe, to whom he was said to owe money ; words would perhaps be followed by blows. An arbiter would try to settle the matter. More battles, more litigation : blows and kissing alternately prevail. All this time we, standing in the cold on a January morning, could not feel very amiable. The dragoman, after making two or three excursions in pursuit of recreants, and finding that when he has got four or five together by means of his koorbatch another half-dozen were missing, is forced to resign himself to his kismet (fate), and sitting down, desperately smokes any amount of cigars. But there is an end to everything, and perhaps by nine o'clock or so we may again be on the march, and trying to make friends with our new guides. How I did wish to be able to speak to them, and to understand what they said !

“ When the desert was flat and bare our day's journey was rather monotonous ; we had to look out for a bird, a shrub, a fossil, or a

flower, and often, indeed, found something rare, beautiful, or curious; but when we had to cross a chain of mountains the views were splendid. The colours of the mountains themselves are so wonderfully varied; one would be a deep dark brown, another of bright white chalk, a third quite yellow in tint, and so on, stretching away, crag after crag, summit after summit, till all the shades would melt into a deep violet. Leaving this scene of beauty behind, we would descend by a path, which sometimes was but a mere rocky ledge, into the narrow valley, where perhaps we should find a mass of white brooms in full blossom, and in the chinks of the rocks cyclamens and many pretty little plants. Then we would have to ascend the mountain on the other side, and the varied costumes of our party, the strongly contrasted colours, the different burdens of the camels, water-barrels, tents, bedding, boxes, even the ugly takt-er-wán, as we could see them all winding up the steep rocks at different distances and in various positions, some far before us, perched apparently on a jutting crag, and others a long way behind, with the ravine between us, greatly enlivened the scene. But now and then we lost our way, for it is difficult to know one wady from another; and I remember one occasion, when our camel-drivers being at fault we had got separated from the main body, four weary times did we go up and down the same ravine, seeking in vain for the tracks. At last the sheikh came to our aid, we got into the line of march, and by-and-by, from a commanding eminence, descried our tents ready pitched on a plain below. And, yes, it was no mistake, there were two little kids frisking about! Delightful idea! The kids must possess a mother, and milk must be in store. Alas, no! The kids had been found drinking at a brackish stream; evidently they had strayed away like ourselves. So there was no milk on that occasion, but we were much too tired to trouble ourselves about its absence, and very glad to retire to our comfortable beds."




ANSWER TO "FEMALE CHRISTIAN NAMES."

1.  LOVELY, indeed, should be the dame
Who answers to fair "Edith's" name.
2. "Alice," I own, is very pretty,
But sadly common—more's the pity.
3. I always think an "Anne" we find
Discreet and gentle, true and kind.
4. Call "Esther" "homely?" No, I ween
'Tis fitting name for stately queen.
5. Henry the Fifth, and Hotspur too,
In "Kate" had wives both good and true.
6. Sweet "Isabel," a tuneful name,
Enshrined in poet's songs of fame.
7. Till "Ellen" showed FitzJames's ring,
She did not know him for her king.
8. Brave "Ellinor," the truest wife
That ever saved a husband's life.
9. Poor "Amy," a more tragic fate
Than thine, no author could relate.
10. "Rowena" sounds so very grand,
'Twill ne'er be common in the land.

M. D.

TO A RUDE LITTLE BOY.

 ILL you not shake hands with me?
Oh, how very rude you are!
There's a little dog you see,
Who is more polite by far.

When I came into the room,
Up he ran, as if to say,
"I'm so very glad you've come,
Are you pretty well to-day?"
Then he put his paw up next,
Holding it for me to take;
And I know he would be vexed
If his hand I did not shake.
When a dog is so well-bred,
Little boys should not be rude.
Yes, your cheeks may well be red!
Come, and kiss me, and be good.

BOOK NOTICES.

"AYS AT LEIGHSCOMBE."



(J. T. Hayes, Lyall Place, Eaton Square.) This is a very pretty tale of country life, brightly and attractively described. The heroine is a capital specimen of practical virtuousness, and forms a good contrast to her young chorister brother, who is less steadfast and easily misled. Very suitable for a prize, or inserting in a children's lending library.

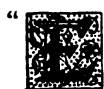
"The Mays of Lorton." (Published by the S. P. C. K.) Here is another tale adapted for village libraries—a family history, relating the somewhat difficult task of reducing a wilful boy to submission, and curing two girls of habits of deceit and gossip. It is full of incident, and amusingly told.

"The Christmas Hamper." By the Author of "Esther Woodville." (Hatchards, Piccadilly.) An amusing but improbable story of a hamper containing two babies, left to the charge of an old couple, living as servants to a rich bachelor in a manufacturing town. The master happening to be out when the present arrives, the charitable recipients make up their minds to adopt the contents, and rear the babies in the kitchen unknown to the head of the house, who

does not become aware of their presence until they are several years old, and crying days are almost ended. The kitchen must have been a very deep cellar one, we suppose; but for those who do not object to improbabilities, the tale will afford a pleasant half-hour's reading.

"Leçons pour des Enfants," avec "Hymnes en prose." Traduites de l'Anglais de Madame Barbauld. New edition, revised by Clothilde Norris. (Lockwood and Co., 7, Stationers'-Hall Court.) Those who are acquainted with Mrs. Barbauld's excellent lessons for young children, and hymns in prose for older ones, cannot fail to welcome this complete French edition of them, in which the two works have been published together after careful revision, and with a convenient vocabulary added at the end for the use of young translators. The lessons commence with short conversational sentences, which may be learnt by heart, and gradually proceed to anecdotes and stories. The hymns dwell chiefly on the beauties of Nature, which they lead the pupil on to admire and appreciate. We highly recommend this little work for use in the schoolroom. It is printed in large, clear type, and bound in cloth, price 2s.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



"M." The origin of Valentine's Day is involved in great obscurity. The Romans kept a feast during a great part of February in honour of Pan and Juno, which is supposed to have given rise to the observance of the day.

"Zoe." Your MSS. will reach the editor, if addressed to the care of the

publishers of whichever magazine you select.

"Lady Averil." Study (even of "dry books") will strengthen and guide, but is not likely to destroy the imaginative powers. To try and write stories or verses is a very common juvenile amusement, and can only be "wrong" if it interferes with duties. Aunt Judy would

kindly and earnestly assure "Lady Averil" that if she allows "dreaminess" to make "work" distasteful, the remedy is self-discipline, and the fault does not lie with God's good gift of imagination, nor with the reading of such books as she speaks of. Everybody, at times, finds it "very hard" to prefer duty to day dreams; and people without a shred of imagination of their own, and who are ignorant of the noble works produced by the imagination of others, have to fight with the temptation to "weave up dreams" about themselves and their own little feelings and fancies, instead of doing their daily work, quite as much as their more gifted or better educated neighbours. At the same time, weaving dreams about fairies, heroes, romances etc., is an innocent and healthy pleasure to many a child; and indolence and selfishness, rather than fancy, are to blame if these interfere with children's duties, or make them unsociable with their brothers and sisters. Indeed, an active fancy is, through life, one of our greatest sources of pleasure. It often distracts our minds from pain or trouble, and it usefully counteracts the narrowing tendency to dwell on petty cares, petty gossip, and petty grievances. With all this, it is, of course, true that over-indulgence in day dreams (especially when self is the hero or heroine) is at first enervating, and at last fatal to mental power, practical usefulness, and religious duty; and that we cannot learn too early that it is amongst our thoughts that the life struggle against selfishness, vanity, indolence, and unholiness, must be carried on. Aunt Judy feels much for a little girl who "has no mother now to ask" about such matters, and hopes her few hints may help little "Lady Averil," in the task of combining home duties and home kindnesses with the pleasures of fancy.

"Jemima and Billie." Your quotation is from the last verse in Canto 27 of Mr. Tennyson's "In Memoriam."

"Ernestina." The hymn you ask for was written by Charlotte Elliott. Hood's "Song of the Shirt," will be found in any complete edition of his poems.

"Twelve years old" is recommended by several correspondents to try the following books on astronomy: "The Starry Heavens;" Part I. of "First Steps to General Knowledge," published by the S. P. C. K.; "Half Hours with the Stars," published by R. Hardwicke, 192, Piccadilly; "John Guy's Astronomy," 3s. 6d.; "Pinnock's First Steps to Astronomy," 6d.; "Tate's Astronomy," 1s.; Lockyer's "Elements of Astronomy," 3s. 6d.; "The Young Astronomer," by J. S. C. Abbott.

"A Canadian" is informed by "Ernestina" that from March to September is the proper time of year in which to graft orange-trees. *Vide* "The Garden: an Illustrated Weekly Journal of Gardening."

If "Constance" has not already procured a book for her collection of stamps, Aunt Judy will be glad to forward the advertisement of a good one (kindly sent by W. G. Bell), on the receipt of a stamped and addressed envelope from "Constance." "Grace" recommends a volume published by Marlborough & Co., 14, Warwick Lane, London, at 1s. 6d.

"A Mandarin." Your first quotation is from a poem by T. Moore. The second from a poem called "Albert Græme," which occurs in Canto vi. of the "Lay of the Last Minstrel."

"Busy Bee." The only blind musician of whom Aunt Judy knows is Caspar Crumbhorn, a native of Silesia, who died in 1621. Beethoven was certainly not afflicted in this way.

"N. C" asks for an exact description of the mode in which the Japanese usually sit?

"Ingaretha." The origin of the old saying is not exactly known. "In Notes

and Queries" the question is discussed at length. One suggestion is that it is derived from an old monkish form of expression—*Mihi et Beati Martini*; another, that it arose from the following incident: "A party of gypsies were apprehended and taken before a magistrate. The constable gave evidence against an extraordinary woman, named *Betty Martin*. She became violently excited, rushed up to him, and gave him a tremendous blow in the eye. After which, the boys and rabble used to follow the unfortunate officer with cries of *My eye and Betty Martin!*" (2nd S., ix., p. 393.) You had better apply to a bookseller for information about the story mentioned. Edward the Confessor was known as *Saint Edward*. You must look for the meaning of your name in Miss Yonge's book on Christian Names. Aunt Judy does not know it.

"Louie." Hymn 309 is by the Rev. G. Thring.

"H. A. B." has kindly forwarded the following receipt for drying flowers, which will be valuable to our young friends who have a taste for botany:

"The colour and form of the most delicate of Alpine flowers are best preserved by placing them on a board in the sun, arranging the petals in their natural positions, and piling silver sand upon them: this method gives the most correct idea of the growth of plants. The less fragile kinds can be preserved by pressing them out flat on paper or wood, and strewing sand over them."

"A Royalist." Aunt Judy supposes that you want a photograph from a *print or picture* of Charles I. Any stationer or bookseller who deals in photographs would help you to procure one.

"E. H. G.," who asked in May for some books on the lives of the saints, is recommended to try Mr. Baring Gould's "History of the Saints," of which one volume has appeared, and three more

are to be published during the course of the year. Or she might find Mrs. Jameson's works useful—"Sacred and Legendary Art;" "Legends of Monastic Orders;" "Legends of the Madonna."

"Josie Hollis" is making a collection of eggs, and would be glad to obtain those of some *sea-birds'* eggs in exchange for inland ones. He offers lesser woodpeckers', blackcaps', and hawfinches'. Address—The Ash, Stedham, Midhurst, Sussex.

"Mortimer Lightwood." Hymn 139 was written by Harriet Auber, 1829. Hymn 117, translated from the German of Christian Fürchtegott Gellert by Frances E. Cox. 340, by the Rev. Frederick Whitfield. 128, translated by Dr. Neale, and slightly altered by the editors of Hymns Ancient and Modern. 345, translated by E. Caswall. The version of 330 is by one of the editors of Hymns A. and M. whose name is not given.

"H. C. P." asks if "any one would kindly lend her a good pattern of a baby's woollen boot, for a few days, with written directions: she would pay the postage and return it carefully." Address—Miss H. C. Pritchard, Chiddingly Vicarage, Hawkhurst.

"Emmie" offers "Mayfly" the following receipt against snails, which she has found very efficacious in the case of some white lilies. She tied a little coarse worsted loosely round the stems very near the ground. Snails dislike a woolly material, so did not cross it; and the plants were unmolested. Can any one tell "Emmie" where the line—

"Rung like a god-swept lyre"

comes from? Both Aunt Judy and the Author of "Six to Sixteen" are delighted to hear of your practical appreciation of the tale.

"Lizzie" and "Elsie and Nelly" must refer to the first passage in our May Correspondence for an answer to their notes.

"Fatima" begs to say that the price of the illuminations she offered for sale in our June No. is 14s. the pair—not 14s. each.

"Croquet." The Greek letters A. E. I. mean *ever, always*, and are put upon trinkets to represent constancy. Aunt Judy does not know what meaning the letters M. I. E. would have on a brooch, unless they are the initials of some one of whom it is a memento.

"H. C. G." The origin of the lines—

"Be the day weary, or be the day long,
At length it ringeth to evensong"

has been discussed in "Notes and Queries" (Series 4, vol. i.), and the most satisfactory conclusion seems to be that it is proverbial. It occurs in John Heywoode's "A Dialogue conteynyng the number of the effectuall proverbes in the Englishe tongue," &c., in the following form:

"Yet is he sure be the dale neuer so long,
Euermore at laste they ryng to euensong."

It was said by George Tankerfield, shortly before his martyrdom at St. Albans; see Foxe's "Acts and Monuments" (vol. vii., p. 346). It occurs also in a poem by Stephen Hawes (who flourished in the early part of the sixteenth century) called "The Pastime of Pleasure." Aunt Judy does not know how to explain their *exact meaning* better than by quoting a similar passage from Dr. Faber:

"Rest comes at length, tho' life be long and dreary,
The day must dawn, and darksome night be past;
Faith's journey ends in welcome to the weary,
And heaven, the heart's true home, will come at last."

"Snowflake." Aunt Judy is much obliged for the handkerchief, which she has forwarded to the Cot patient. She is not able to dispose of such articles by sale.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, June 15th, 1872.

The last report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot" referred to the little patient, "Toby," as being obliged to be kept very quiet: since that time she has made such good progress as to be recommended for the usual stay at the Convalescent Hospital, before returning to her home in Kent. She has passed safely through the severe surgical operation, and has now left the Aunt Judy's Cot. Children are fond of new scenes, and therefore little "Toby" did not sympathize in the general regret at the proposed departure of the pet of the ward from Great Ormond Street. When the day came for her to leave, she announced, with much glee, to everybody who came into the ward, "*I'm going 'Igate*:"* a piece of information which she expected would astonish both nurses and doctors, who, of *course*, would not know anything about it, until apprised of the fact by Toby herself!

A new little patient now occupies the Cot, and so far as can at present be surmised, she is likely to remain many weeks before she becomes so blithe and gay a child as her predecessor. Her name is Jane D——, and she is the daughter of a London lamplighter. Doubtless many of Aunt Judy's young readers have watched the lighting up of the street lamps, but it may never have occurred to them that the man who runs from lamp to lamp, lighting up, as it were mechanically, the darkening streets, may have a poor homo not far off, with a wife and children depending upon the fruit of his toil for their daily bread: it was from such a home that Janie D—— came, and where, perhaps, she had laid on her weary sick bed, picturing her father with his lamp

* The Convalescent Home is at Highgate.

at work, and longing for his return. Poor little Janie's illness was caused in a manner which all brave boys will be grieved to hear of: Janie was on her way to the baker's shop, on an errand or her mother, when a boy threw a stone at her, which struck the ankle bone, causing much pain and suffering, and it is feared that the poor little foot may have to be removed altogether. It occurred on Christmas Eve, when all the world makes merry, and the lamplighter's little home was not different from other homes on the occasion. Janie's mother had saved up a little money, and the orthodox Christmas plum-pudding was made: round this the father, mother, and their six children tried to forget all troubles for a time, and be happy in the pure love of their humble home; but Janie could not forget the pain, which she tried to bear bravely, for it "*would keep coming*." We are sure that the thoughtless, if not cowardly, boy who threw the stone would have been sorry and ashamed of the act if he could have known how sadly the poor little girl's Christmas Day was spoiled, and to what a painful result it may lead. Since that time the foot has been more troublesome, but neither father nor mother liked to part with their child, so it was not until June that she was brought to the Hospital, and admitted as an in-patient; and she is both patient and good, although at times it is not easy to bear the great pain that she suffers. Little Janie is as happy in "Aunt Judy's Cot" as, in the sad circumstances, any little girl can be; and on the 13th of the month (June) she was much interested in hearing from some ladies (who reside in "Aunt Judy's" parish) a great deal about the kind lady, by whose thoughtfulness and care for little sick children the Cot she occupies was established, and of which Janie is so proud. Some lovely toys were given to her, and to other of the little girls in the same ward, which have afforded great

enjoyment for many weary hours. It is hoped that next month a better report may be given of Janie, but at present her condition is very critical.

The demand for copies of the photograph of "Toby" has been so unexpectedly large, that some delay in sending them to the young subscribers has been unavoidable. The Secretary has now a further supply, and will be glad to distribute the remainder on application by letter, enclosing an addressed and stamped envelope. The photograph is sold to non-subscribers to the Cot—price sixpence each.

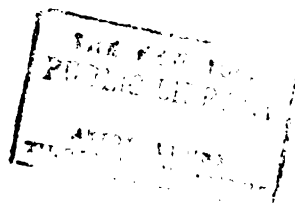
Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to June 15th, 1872.

£ s. d.

G. M. Gwyn, Great Marlow			
(monthly)	0	1	0
"The Black Kitten" (every			
other month)	0	0	6
Oriea, Bradbourne Vicarage,			
Wirksworth (monthly) . . .	0	0	6
Ditto ditto	0	3	6
Little Frankie [for May and			
June] (monthly)	0	2	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Mamma, Margie, and Helen			
(monthly)	0	1	0
E. A. C. (every two months) .	0	5	0
"Tricky-Wee, Giantland" . .	0	2	0
Collected by A. E. from School-			
fellows	0	1	0
Pussie, Headley	0	2	6
Dame Durden	0	1	6
Marmy, Tommy, and Walter,			
Newbury	0	7	0
Ada and Rosa Moss (collected)	0	3	0
A Whitsuntide Offering . . .	0	0	6
"Nora, 'Babs,' and Carrie, pro-			
ceeds of a bazaar and tea in			
the greenhouse"	5	12	4
Edith, Kirk Ella	0	2	6
"Our own eleven"	0	6	9
Struwelpeter, 6d., Tadpole, 6d.,			
Mopsa, 6d., Ennie, 4d.,			
Pucco, 2d.	0	2	0

	£	s.	d.		£	s.	d.
Allie	0	1	0	May Warner, Flixton, Bungay .	0	3	6
A. W. O.	0	1	0	"Toots and Babie"	0	0	6
H. Burley, Mallow House (col- lected)	0	10	0	The Little Wanderers (col- lected)	0	0	8
"Little Folks at Egerton House," 12 Saturday pennies, for Toby	0	1	0	Jack and Jill, South Lambeth .	0	0	3
Lizzie, Jessie, Gertrude, Ethel, and James Ward, Forest Lodge, Forest Gate, Essex .	1	2	6	"Tumbledown Timothy," Glou- cester Gate	0	0	4
J. W. T. and Friends	0	5	6	A few Little Boys at Lindow Grove	0	1	6
Emma and Edith, Aigburth .	1	4	6	Clara, 5s., Bertha, 1s., collected in box	0	6	0
Mary, Walter, and Ruth, pro- ceeds of a little bazaar, on behalf of the second Cot . .	1	12	6	Evelyn A. Parker	0	0	6
Ditto ditto, a second bazaar	1	1	3	Two Sisters, who have been ill .	0	2	0
Some Little Friends of Aunt Judy, Tunbridge Wells . .	0	5	0	Carpe Diem	0	2	0
Busy Bee, Friak, and the Man- darin	0	3	6	Grace	0	2	6
Collected by two little Doves .	0	1	0	Edith Bovill, 22, St. James's Street, Buckingham Gate . .	0	3	0
Nina, Alice, and Annie . . .	0	3	0	Francis, 1s., Ino, 1s., Gerald, 1s., The Shrimp, 6d., Keggie, 1s., The White Kitten, 6d. . . .	0	5	0
Josie, Edwin and Edith Hollis .	0	3	0	Collected by Sarah Benny and Kate Brierley	0	5	6
S. D. Spicer (collected) . . .	0	12	9	Madge	0	0	6
Mabel Smyth	0	2	0	Sarah, a toy-book for Toby.			
"Five Orange Blossoms," Bel- fast	0	3	0	Miss D—, Car., Carrie and Lilie, a parcel of clothing.			
British Matron, 2s. 6d., Pet Cleaver, 2s. 6d., Grannie, 2s. 6d., Officious Viper, 2s. 6d., The Lecturer, 2s. 6d., Fan- tastic Pet, 2s. 6d., Darling with the nut-brown hair, 2s. 6d., Trap to catch a Sun- beam, 2s. 6d.	1	0	0	Little Stanley, some cards for the Cot.			
Eva, Nelly, Mamma, and Auntie, Longlands	0	8	0	Carrie and Willie, two chairs made by a little boy from crow's feathers, for the occu- pant of the Cot.			
				Laury Nimelion, a packet of pictures and a coloured Red Riding Hood.			
				Alice, Evelyn, Florence, and Rose, some clothing.			







SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XX.

NORTHWARDS.—THE BLACK COUNTRY.—THE STONE COUNTRY.



WE had a very noisy, happy journey to London. We chattered, and laughed, and hopped about like a lot of birds turned out of a cage. Emma sat by the window, and made a running commentary upon everybody and everything we passed in a strain of what seemed to us irresistible wit and humour. I fear that our conduct was not very decorous, but in the circumstances we were to be excused. The reaction was overwhelming.

Eleanor and I sobered down after we parted with the other girls, and thus became sensible of some fatigue and faintness. We had been too much excited to eat any of the bread and butter prepared for our early breakfast at Bush House. We had run up and down, and stood on our feet about three times as much as need was; we had talked, and laughed, and shaken ourselves incessantly; we had put out our heads in the wind and sun as the train flew on; we had tried to waltz between the seats, and had eaten two ounces of "mixed sweets" given us by the housemaid, and deluged each other with some very heavy-scented perfume belonging to one of us.

After all this, Eleanor and I felt tired before our long journey had begun. We felt faint, sick, anything but hungry, and should probably have travelled north in rather a pitiable plight, had not a motherly-looking lady, who sat in the waiting-room reading a very dirty book of tracts—and who had witnessed both our noisy parting with our companions and the subsequent collapse—advised us to go to the refreshment room and get some breakfast. We yielded at last, out of complaisance towards her, and were rewarded by feeling wonderfully refreshed by a solid meal.

We laid in a stock of buns and chocolate lozenges for future consumption, and—thanks to Eleanor's presence of mind and experience—we got our luggage together, and started in the north train in a carriage by ourselves.

We talked very little now. Eleanor gazed out of her window, and I out of mine, in silence. As we got farther north, Eleanor's eyes dilated with a curious glow of pride and satisfaction. I had then no special attachment to one part of England more than another, but I had never seen so much of the country before, and it was a treat which did not lose by comparison with the limited range of our view at Bush House.

As we ran on, the bright, pretty, sociable-looking suburbs of London gave way to real country—beautiful, cared-for, garden-like, with grand timber, and big houses, and grey churches, supported by the obvious parsonage and school, and deep shady lanes, with some little cart trotting quaintly towards the railway bridge over which we rushed, or boys in smock-frocks sitting on a gate, and shouting friendly salutations (as it seemed) to Eleanor and myself. Then broad, fair pastures of fairy green, and slow winding rivers that we came up with and overtook almost before we had seen them, with ghostly grey pollard willows in formal mystical borders, contrasting with such tints of pale yellows and gay greens, which in their turn shone against low distances of soft blue and purple, that the sense of colour which my great-grandfather had roused in me made me almost tremble with a never-to-be-forgotten pleasure. From this flat, but most fair country, the grey towers of Peterborough Cathedral stood up in ancient dignity; and then we ran on again. After a while the country became less rich in colour, and grander in form. No longer stretching flatly to low-lying distances of ethereal hue, it was broken into wooded hills, which folded one over the other with ever-increasing boldness of outline. Now and then the line ran through woods of young oak, with male ferns and bracken at their feet, where the wild hyacinths which lie there like a blue mist in May, must, for some weeks past, have made way for the present carpet of pink campion.

And now the distance was no longer azure. Over the horizon and the lower part of the sky a thin grey veil had come—a veil of smoke. We were approaching the manufacturing districts. Grander and grander grew the country, less and less pure the colouring. The vegetation was rich almost to rankness; the well-wooded distances were heavily grey. Then tall chimneys poured smoke over the landscape and eclipsed the sun, and through strangely shaped furnaces and chimneys of many forms, which here poured fire from their

throats like dragons, and there might have been the huge retorts and chemical apparatus of some giant alchymist, we ran into the station of a manufacturing town.

I gazed at the high blackened warehouses, chimneys, and furnaces, which loomed out of the stifling smoke and clanging noises, with horror and wonder.

"What a dreadful place!" I exclaimed. "Look at these dreadful things with flames coming out; and oh, Eleanor! there's fire coming out of the ground there. And look at that man opening that great oven door! Oh, what a fire! And what's he poking in it for? And do look! all the men are black. And what a frightful noise everything makes!"

Eleanor was looking all the time, but with a complacent expression. She only said, "It is a very busy place. I hear trade's good just now, too." And, "You should see the furnaces at night, Margery, lighting up all the hills. It's grand!"

And as she sniffed up the smoke with, I might almost say, relish, I felt that she did not sympathise with my disgust. But any discussion on the subject was stopped by my getting a "black" into my eye—a bit of iron "filings," I think. It gave me a good deal of pain and inconvenience, and by the time that I could look out of the window again we had left the black town far behind. The hills were almost mountains now, and sloped away on all sides of us in bleak and awful grandeur. The woodlands were fewer; we were on the moors. Only a few hours back we had been amongst deep hedges and shady lanes, and now for hedges we had stone walls, and for deep embowered lanes we could trace the unsheltered roads, gleaming as they wound over miles of distant hills. Deep below us brawled a river, with here and there a gaunt mill or stone-built hamlet on its banks.

I had never seen any country like this; and if I had been horrified by the black town, my delight with the noble scenery beyond it was in proportion. I stood at the open window, with the moor breeze blowing my hair into the wildest elf-locks, rapturously excited as the great hills unfolded themselves and the shifting clouds sent shifting purple shadows over them. Very dark and stern they looked in shade, and then, in a moment more, the cloud was past, and a broad smile of sunshine ran over their face, and showed where cultivation was creeping up the hill-side, and turning the heather into fields.

Eleanor leaned out of the window also. Excitement, which set me chattering, always made her silent. But her parted lips, distended nostrils, and the light in her eyes, bore witness to that strange power which hill country sways over hill-born people. To me it was beautiful, but to her it was home. I better understood now, too, her old complaints of the sheltered (she called it *stuffy*) lane in which we walked two and two, when we "went into the country" at school. She used to rave against the park palings that hedged us in on either side, and declare her longing to tear them up and let a little air in, or at least to be herself somewhere where "one could see a few miles about one, and breathe some wind."

As we stood now, drinking in the breeze, I think the same thought struck us both, and we exclaimed with one voice, "Poor Maria! How she would have enjoyed this!"

We next stopped at a rather dreary looking station, where we got out, and Eleanor got our luggage together, aided by a porter who seemed to know her, and whom she seemed to understand, though his dialect was unintelligible to me.

"I suppose we must have a cab," said Eleanor, at last. "They don't expect us."

"*Tommusisintarn*," said the porter, suggestively; which, being interpreted, meant, "Thomas is in the town."

"To be sure, for the meat," said Eleanor. "The dog-cart, I suppose?"

"And t'owd mare," added the porter.

"Well, the boxes must come by the carrier. Come along, Margery, if you don't mind a little bit of walking. We must find Thomas."

"We have to send down to the town for meat," she added.

We found Thomas in the yard of a small inn. He was just about to start homewards.

By Eleanor's order, Thomas lifted me into the dog-cart, and then, to my astonishment, asked "Miss Eleanor" if she would drive. Eleanor nodded, and climbing on to the driver's seat, took the reins with reassuring calmness. Thomas balanced the meat-basket behind, and "t'owd mare" started at a good pace up a hill which would have reduced most south country horses to crawl.

"Father and mother are away still," said Eleanor, after a pause. "So Thomas says. But they'll be back in a day or two."

We were driving up a sandy road such as we had seen winding over the hills. To our left there was a precipitous descent to the vale of the river. To our right, flowers, and ferns, and heather climbed the steep hill, broken at every few yards by tiny torrents of mountain streams. The sun was setting over the distant Deadmanstone moors; little dropping wells tinkled by the roadside, where dozens of fat black snails were out for an evening stroll, and here and there a brimming stone trough reflected the rosy tints of the sky.

It was grey and chilly when we drove into the village. A stone pack-horse track, which now served as footpath, had run by the road and lasted into the village. The cottages were of stone, the walls and outhouses were of stone, and the vista was closed by an old stone church, like a miniature cathedral. There was more stone than grass in the churchyard, and there were more loose stones than were pleasant on the steep hill, up which we scrambled before taking a sharp turn into the Vicarage grounds. *Sp*

CHAPTER XXI.

THE VICARAGE.—KEZIAH.—COOK.—THE DEAR BOYS.—TEA.—BEDFELLOWS.

It was Midsummer. The heavy foliage brushed our faces as "the old mare," with slack reins upon her back, drew us soberly up the steep drive, and stood still, of her own accord, before a substantial looking house, built—"like everything else," I thought—of stone. Huge rose bushes—literal *bushes*, not "dwarfs" or "standards"—the growth of many years, bent under their load of blossoms. The old "maiden's blush," too rare now in our bedding-plant gardens, the velvety "damask," the wee Scotch roses, the prolific white, and the curious "York and Lancaster," with monster moss-rose trees, hung over the carriage road. The place seemed almost overgrown with vegetation, like the palace of the Sleeping Beauty. As we turned the corner to the house, Eleanor put out her left hand and dragged off a great branch of "maiden's blush." She forgot the recoil, which came against my face. All the full-blown flowers shed their petals over me, and I made my first appearance at the Vicarage covered with rose leaves.

It was Keziah who welcomed us, and I have always had an affection for her in consequence. She was housemaid then, and took to the kitchen afterwards. After she had been about five years at the Vicarage, she announced one day that she wished to go. She had no reason to give but that she "thought she'd try a change." She tried one—for a month—and didn't like it. Mr. Arkwright took her back again, and in kitchen and back premises she reigns supreme to this day.

From her we learned that Mr. and Mrs. Arkwright, who had gone away for a parson's fortnight, were still from home. We had no lack of welcome, however.

It seems strange enough to speak of a fire as comfortable in July. And yet I well remember that the heavy dew and evening breeze were almost chilly after sunset, and a sort of vault-like feeling about the rooms, which had been for a week or more unused, made us offer no resistance when Keziah began to light a fire. While she was doing so, Eleanor exclaimed, "Let's go and warm ourselves in the kitchen."

Any idea of comfort connected with a kitchen was quite new to me, but I followed Eleanor, and made my first acquaintance with the old room where we have spent so many happy hours.

We found the door shut; much, it seemed, to Eleanor's astonishment. But the reason was soon evident. As our footsteps sounded on the stone passage there arose from behind the kitchen door an utterly indescribable din of howling, yowling, squealing, scratching, and barking.

"It's the dear boys!" said Eleanor, and she ran to open the door. For a moment I thought of her brothers (who must, obviously, be maniacs!), but I soon discovered that the "dear boys" were the dogs of the establishment, who were at once let loose upon us *en masse*. I have a faint remembrance of Eleanor and a brown retriever falling into each other's arms with cries of delight; but I was a good deal absorbed by the care of my own small person, under the heavy onslaught of dogs big and little. I was licked copiously from chin to forehead by the more impetuous, and smelt threateningly at the calves of my legs by the more cautious of the pack.

They were subsiding a little, when Eleanor said, "Oh, cook, why did you shut them up? Why didn't you let them come and meet us?"

"And how was I to know who it was at the door, Miss Eleanor?" replied an elderly, stern-looking female, who, in her time, ruled us all

with a rod of iron, the dogs included. "Dear knows it's not that I want them in the kitchen. The way them dogs behaves, Miss Eleanor, is *scandilus*."

"Dear boys!" murmured Eleanor; on which all the dogs, who were settling down to sleep on the hearth, wagged their tails, and threatened to move.

"Much good it is me cleaning," cook continued, "when that great big brown beast of yours goes roaming about every night in the shrubberies, and comes in with his feet all over my clean floor."

"It makes rather pretty marks, I think," said Eleanor; "like pot moulding, only not white. But never mind, you've me at home now to wipe their paws."

"They've missed you sorely," said cook, who seemed to be softening. "I almost think they knew it was you, they were so mad to get out."

"Dear boys!" cried Eleanor, once more; and the dogs, who were asleep now, wagged their tails in their dreams.

And there's more's missed you than them," cook continued. "But, bless us, Miss Eleanor, you don't look much better for being in strange parts. That young lady, too, looks as if she enjoyed poor health. Well, give me native air, there's nothing like it; and you've not got back to yours too soon."

Eleanor threw her arms round the cook, and danced her up and down the kitchen.

"Oh, dear Cookey!" she cried, "I am so glad to be back again. And do be kind to us, and give us brown bread toast, and let the dogs come in to tea."

Cook pushed her away, but with a relenting face.

"There, there, Miss Eleanor. Take that jug of hot water with you, and take the young lady upstairs; and when you've cleaned yourselves, I'll have something for you to eat, and you may suit yourselves about the dogs. I'm sure I don't want them."

"You've not got so much more sensible with all your schooling," she added.

We went off to do her bidding, and left her muttering, "And what folks as can odicate their own children sends 'em all out of the house for, passes me; to come back looking like a damp handkerchief, with dear knows what cheap living and unwholesome ways, and want of native air."

Cook's bark was worse than her bite.

"She gives the dear boys plenty to eat," said Eleanor, and she provided for us that evening in the same liberal spirit.

What a feast we had! Strong tea, and abundance of sugar and rich cream. We laid the delicious butter on our bread in such thick clumps, that sallow-faced Madame would have thought us in peril of our lives. There was brown bread toast, too; and fried ham and eggs, and moor honey, and tea-cakes. In the middle of the table Keziah had placed a large punch-bowl, filled with roses.

And all the dogs were on the hearth, and they all had tea with us.

After tea we tried to talk, but were so sleepy that the words died away on our heavy lips. So we took Keziah's advice and went to bed.

"Keziah has put the chair-bed into my room, Margery dear," said Eleanor.

"I am so glad," said I. "I would rather be with you."

"Would you like a dog to sleep with you?" Eleanor politely inquired. "I shall have Growler inside, and my big boy outside. Pincher is a nice little fellow; you'd better have Pincher."

I took Pincher accordingly, and Pincher took the middle of the bed.

We were just dropping off to sleep when Eleanor said, "If Pincher snores, darling, hit him on the nose."

"All right," said I. "Good-night." I had begun a confused dream, woven from my late experiences, when Eleanor's voice roused me once more.

"Margery dear, if Growler *should* get out of my bed and come on to yours, mind you kick him off, or he and Pincher will fight through the bedclothes."

But whether Pincher did snore, or Growler invade our bed, I slept much too soundly to be able to tell.

CHAPTER XXII.

GARDENING.—DRINKINGS.—THE MOORS.—WADING.—BATROCHOSPERMA.—
THE CHURCH.

BOTH Eleanor and I were visited that night by dreams of terrible complications with the authorities at Bush House. It was a curious relief to us to wake to clear consciences and the absolute control of our own conduct for the day.

It took me several minutes fairly to wake up and realize my new position. The window being in the opposite direction (as regarded my bed) from that of our room at Miss Mulberry's, the light puzzled me, and I lay blinking stupidly at a spray of ivy that had poked itself through the window as if for shelter from the sun, which was already blazing outside. Pincher brought me to my senses by washing my face with his tongue; which I took all the kinder of him that he had been, of all the dear boys, the most doubtful about the calves of my legs the evening before.

As we dressed, I adopted Eleanor's fashion of doing so on foot, that I might examine her room. As is the case with the "bowers" of most English country girls of her class, it was rich in those treasures which, like the advertised contents of lost pocket-books, are "of no value to any one but the owner." Prints of sacred subjects in home-made frames, knick-knacks of motley variety, daguerreotypes and second-rate photographs of "the boys"—*i.e.* Clement and Jack—at different ages, and of "the dear boys" also. "All sorts of things!" as I exclaimed admiringly. But Eleanor threatened at last to fine me if I did not get dressed instead of staring about me, so we went downstairs, and had breakfast with the dogs.

"The boys will be home soon," said Eleanor, as we devoured certain plates of oatmeal porridge, which Keziah had provided, and which I tasted then for the first time.

"I must get their gardens tidied up before they come. Shall you mind helping me, Margery?"

The idea delighted me, and after breakfast we tied on our hats, rummaged out some small tools from the porch, and made our way to the children's gardens. They were at some little distance from "the big flower garden," and the path that led to them was heavily shaded by shrubbery on one side, and on the other by a hedge which, though "quick-set" as a foundation, was now a mass of honeysuckle and everlasting peas. The scent was delicious.

From this we came out on an open space at the top of the kitchen garden, where, under a wall overgrown with ivy, lay the children's gardens.

"What a wilderness!" was Eleanor's first exclamation, in a tone of dismay, and then she added with increased vehemence, "He's taken away the rhubarb-pot. What will Clement say?"

"What is it, dear?" I asked.

"It's the rhubarb-pot," Eleanor repeated. "You know Clement is always having new fads every holidays, and he can't bear his things being disturbed whilst he's at school. But how can I help it if I'm at school too?"

"Of course you can't," said I, gladly seizing upon the only point in her story that I could understand, to express my sympathy.

"And he got one of the rhubarb-pots last holidays," Eleanor continued. "It was rather broken, and Thomas gave in to his having it then, so it's very mean of him to have moved it now, and I shall tell him so. And Clement painted church windows on it, and stuck it over a plant of ivy at the top of the garden. He thought it would force the ivy, and he expected it would grow quite big by the time he came home. He wanted it to hang over the top, and look like a ruin. Oh, he will be so vexed!"

The ivy plant was alive, though the "ruin" had been removed by the sacrilegious hands of Thomas. I suggested that we should build a ruin of stones, and train the ivy over that; which idea was well received by Eleanor; the more so that a broken wall at the top of the croft supplied materials, and Stonehenge suggested itself as an easy, and certainly respectable, model.

Meanwhile we decided to "do the weeding first," as being the least agreeable business, and so set to work; I in a leisurely manner, befitting the heat of the day, and Eleanor with her usual energy. She toiled without a pause, and accomplished about treble the result of my labours. After we had worked for a long time, she sat up, pressing her hand to her forehead.

"My head quite aches, Margery, and I'm so dizzy. It's very odd; gardening never made me so before I went away."

"You work so at it," said I, "you may well be tired. What makes you work so at things?"

"I don't know," said Eleanor, laughing. "Cook says I do foy at things so. But when one once begins, you know——"

"What's *foy*?" I interrupted. "Cook says you foy—what does she mean?"

"Oh, to foy at anything is to slave—to work hard at it. At least not merely hard-working, but to go at it very hotly, almost foolishly; in fact to foy at it, you know. Clement foyes at things

awfully too. And then he gets tired and cross. What o'clock is it, Margery?"

I pulled out my souvenir watch and answered, "Just eleven."

"We ought to have some 'drinkings,' we've worked so hard," said Eleanor. "Haymakers, and people like that, always have drinkings at eleven, you know, and dinner at one, and tea at four or five, and supper at eight. Ah! there goes Thomas. Thomas!"

Thomas came up, and Eleanor (discreetly postponing the subject of the rhubarb-pot for the present) sent a pleading message to Cook, which resulted in her sending us two bottles of ginger-beer, and several slices of thick bread and butter. The dear boys, who had been very sensibly snoozing in the shade, divined by some instinct the arrival of our lunch basket, and were kind enough to share the bread and butter with us.

"Drinkings" over, we set to work again.

I was surprised to observe that there were four box-edged beds, but as Eleanor said nothing about it, I made no remark. Perhaps it belonged to some dead brother or sister.

As the weeds were cleared away, one plant after another became apparent. I called Eleanor's attention to all that I found, and she seemed to welcome them as old friends.

"Oh, that's the grey primrose: I'm so glad! And there are Jack's hepaticas; they look like old rubbish. Don't dig deep into Jack's garden, please, for he's always getting plants and bulbs given him by people in the village, and he sticks everything in, so his garden really is cram full; and you're sure to dig into tulips, or crocuses, or lilies, or something valuable."

"Doesn't Clement get things given him?" said I.

"Oh, he has plenty of plants," said Eleanor, "but then he's always making great plans about his garden; and the first step towards his improvements is always to clear out all the old things, and make what he calls 'a clean sweep of the rubbish.'"

By the time that the "twelve-o'clock bell" rang from the church-tower below, the heat was so great that we gathered up our tools and went home.

In the afternoon Eleanor said, "Were you ever on the moors? Did you ever wade? Do you care about water-weeds? Did you ever eat bilberries, or carberries?—but they're not ripe yet. Shall we go and

get some *Batrochosperma*, and paddle a bit, and give the dear boys a bathe?"

"Delightful!" said I; "but do you go out alone?"

"What should we take anybody with us for?" said Eleanor, opening her eyes.

I could not say. But as we dressed I said, "I'm so glad you don't wear veils. Maria and I used to have to wear veils to take care of our complexion."

Eschewing veils, gloves, and every unnecessary incumbrance, we set forth, followed by the dogs. I had taken off my crinoline, because Eleanor said we might have to climb some walls, and I had borrowed a pair of her boots, because my own were so uncomfortable from being high-heeled and narrow-soled. They were too thin for stony roads also, and though they were prettily ornamented, they pinched my feet.

We went upwards from the Vicarage along hot roads bordered by stone walls. At last we turned and began to go downwards, and as we stood on the top of the steep hill we were about to descend, Eleanor, with some pride in her tone, asked me what I thought of the view.

It was very beautiful. The slopes of the purple hills were grand. I saw "moors" now.

"The best part of it is the air, though," she said.

The air was, in fact, wind; but of a dry, soft, exhilarating kind. It seemed to get into our heads, and we joined hands and ran wildly down the steep hill together.

"What fun!" Eleanor cried, as we paused to gain breath at the bottom. "Now you've come there'll be four of us to run downhill. We shall nearly stretch across the road."

At last we came to a stone bridge which spanned the river. It was not a very wide stream, and it was so broken with grey boulders, and clumps of rushes and overhanging ferns, that one only caught sight of the water here and there, in tiny torrents and lakes among the weeds.

My delight was boundless. I can neither forget nor describe those first experiences of real country life, when Eleanor and I rambled about together. I think she was at least as happy as I, and from time to time we both wished with all our hearts that "the other girls" could be there too. The least wisely managed of respectable schools

has this good point, that it enlarges one's sympathies and friendships!

We wandered some little way up the Ewden, as Eleanor called the river, and then coming to a clear-running bit of stream, with a big grey boulder on the bank hard by to leave our shoes and stockings on, we took these off, and also our hats, and kilting up our petticoats, plunged bravely into the stream.

"Wet your head!" shouted Eleanor, and following her example as well as I could for laughing, and for the needful efforts to keep my feet, I dabbled my head liberally with water scooped up in the palms of my hands.

"Oh!" I cried, "how strong the water is, and how deliciously cold it is! And oh, look at the little fishes! They're all round my feet. And oh, Eleanor, call the dogs, they're knocking me down! How hard the stones are, and oh, how slippery!"

I fell against a convenient boulder, and Eleanor turned back, the dogs raging and splashing around her.

"I hope you're not treading on the *Batrochosperma*?" she said, anxiously.

"What is it?" I cried.

"It's what I've chiefly come in for," said she. "I want some to lay out. It's a water-weed; a fresh-water alga, you know, like seaweed, only a fresh-water plant. I'm looking for the stone it grew near. Oh, that's it you're on! Climb up on to it out of the way, Margery dear. It's rather a rare kind, and I don't want it to be spoiled. Call the dogs, please. Oh, look at all the bits they've broken off!"

And Eleanor dodged and darted to catch certain fragments of dark-looking stuff that were being whirled away. With much difficulty she caught two or three, and laid one of them in my hand. But I was not prepared for the fact that it felt like a bit of jelly, and it slipped through my fingers before I had time to examine the beauty of the jointed branches pointed out by Eleanor, and in a moment more it was hopelessly lost. We put what we had got into some dock-leaves for safety, and having waded back to our stockings, we put on our hats and walked barefoot for a few yards through the heather, to dry our feet, after which we resumed our boots and stockings and set off homewards.

"We'll go by the lower road," said Eleanor, "and look at the church."

I lingered for some time after Eleanor had passed in through the rickety gates of the south porch, amongst the thickest gravestones, reading their quaint inscriptions. Quaint both in matter and in the manner of rhyme and spelling. As I also drew towards the porch, I looked up to see if I could tell the time by the dial above it. I could not, nor (in spite of my brief learning in Dr. Russell's grammar) could I interpret the Latin motto, *Fugit Hora. Ora.*—The hour flies. Pray.

As I came slowly and softly up the aisle I fancied Eleanor was kneeling, but a strange British shame of prayer made her start to her feet and kept me from kneeling also; though the peculiar peace and devout solemnity, which seemed to be the very breath of that ancient House of God, made me long to do something more expressive of my feelings than stand and stare. There was no handsome church at Rifebury; the one the Bullers "attended" when we were at the seaside was new, and not beautiful. The one Miss Mulberry took us to was older, but uglier. I had never seen one of these old parish churches. This cathedral among the moors, with its massive masonry, its dark oak carving, its fragments of gorgeous glass, its ghostly hatchments and banners, and its aisles paved with the tombstones of the dead, was a new revelation.

I was silent awhile in very awe. I think it was a bird beginning to chirp in the roof which made me dare to speak, and then I whispered, "How quiet it is in here, and how cool!"

I had hardly uttered the words when a flash of lightning made me start and cry out. A heavy peal of thunder followed very quickly.

"Don't be frightened, Margery dear," said Eleanor, "we have very heavy storms here, and we had better go home. But I am so glad you admire our dear old church. There was one very hot Sunday last summer, when a thunderstorm came on during Evening Prayers. I was sitting in the choir, where I could see the storm through the south transept door, and the great stones in the transept arches. It was so cool in here, and all along I kept thinking of 'a refuge from the storm, a shadow in the heat,' and 'a great rock in a weary land.'"

CHAPTER XXIII.

LITTLE MARGARET.—NEWS.—THE ARKWRIGHTS COME HOME.—THE BEASTS.
As we sat together at tea that evening, Eleanor went back to the subject of the church. I made some remark about the gravestones in

the aisles, and she said, "Next time we go in, I want to show you one of them in the chancel."

"Who is buried there?" I asked.

"My grandfather; he was vicar, you know, and my aunt, who was sixteen. (My father has got the white gloves and wreath that were hung in the church for her. They always used to do that for unmarried girls). And my sister: my only sister—little Margaret."

I could not say anything to poor Eleanor. I stroked her head softly and kissed it.

"One thing that made me take to you," she went on, "was your name being Margaret. I used to think she might have been like you. I have so wished I had a sister. The boys are very dear, you know; but still boys think about themselves, of course, and their own affairs. One has more to run after them, you know. Not that any boys could be better than ours, but—any way, Margery darling, I wish you weren't here just on a visit, but were going to stop here always, and be my sister!"

"So do I!" I cried; "oh, so very much, Eleanor!"

It is not often (out of a fairy tale) that wishes to change the whole current of one's life are granted so promptly as this wish of mine was.

The next morning's post brought a letter from Mrs. Arkwright. They were staying in the south of England, and had seen the Bullers, and heard all their news. It was an important budget. They were going abroad once more, and it had been arranged between my two guardians that I was to remain in England for my education, and that my home was to be—with Eleanor. Maria was to go with her parents; to the benefit, it was hoped, of her health. Aunt Theresa sent me the kindest messages, and promised to write to me. Maria sent her love to us both.

"And the day after to-morrow they come home!" Eleanor announced.

When the day came we spent most of it in small preparations and useless restlessness. We filled all the flower vases in the drawing-room, put some of the choicest roses in Mrs. Arkwright's bedroom, and made ourselves very hot in hanging a small union-jack which belonged to the boys out of our own window, which looked towards the high-road. Eleanor even went so far as to provoke a severe snub from the

cook, by offering suggestions as to the food to be prepared for the travellers.

The dogs fully understood that something was impending, and wandered from room to room at our heels, sitting down to pant whenever we gave them a chance, and emptying the water jug in Mr. Arkwright's dressing-room so often that we were obliged to shut up the room when Keziah had once more filled the ewer.

About half an hour after the curfew bell had rung the cab came. The dogs were not shut up this time, and they, and we, and the Arkwrights met in a very confused and noisy greeting.

"God bless you, my dear!" said Mr. Arkwright, very affectionately, and he added almost in the same breath, "Do call off the dogs, my dear, or else take your mother's beasts."

I suppose Eleanor chose the latter alternative, for she did not call off the dogs, but she took away two or three tin cans with which Mr. Arkwright was laden, which had made him look like a particularly respectable milkman.

"What are they?" she asked.

"Crassys," said Mrs. Arkwright, with apparent triumph in her tone, "and Serpulæ, and two Chitons, and several other things."

I thought of Uncle Buller's "collection," and was about to ask if the new "beasts" were insects, when Eleanor, after a doubtful glance into the cans, said, "Have you brought any fresh water?"

Mrs. Arkwright pointed triumphantly at a big stone bottle cased in wickerwork, under which the cabman was staggering towards the door. It looked like spirits or vinegar, but was, as I discovered, seawater for the aquarium. With this I had already made acquaintance, having helped Eleanor to wipe the mouths of certain spotted sea anemones with a camel's-hair brush every day since my arrival.

"The Crassys are much more beautiful," she assured me, as we helped Mrs. Arkwright to find places for the new comers. "We call them Crassys because their name is Crassicornis. I don't believe they'll live, though, they are so delicate."

"I rather think it may be because being so big they got hurt in being taken off the rocks," said Mrs. Arkwright, "and we were very careful with these."

"I'm afraid the Serpulæ won't live!" said Eleanor, gazing anxiously with puckered brows into the glass tank. Mrs. Arkwright was about

to reply when the dogs burst into the room, and, after nearly upsetting both us and the aquarium, bounded out again.

"Dear boys!" cried Eleanor. And "Dear boys!" murmured Mrs. Arkwright from behind the magnifying glass, through which she was examining the "beasts."


"I wonder what they're running in and out for?" said I.

The reason proved to be that supper was ready, and the dogs wanted us to come into the dining-room. Mr. Arkwright announced it in more sedate fashion, and took me with him, leaving Eleanor and her mother to follow us.

"In three days more," said Eleanor, as we sat down, "the boys will be here, and then we shall be quite happy."

(To be continued.)

ALI; OR, THE DISCONTENTED DONKEY-BOY OF THE BAB-EN-NASR.

LI-IBN-DAOUD was a donkey-boy, and the only son of an old, blind donkey-man, whom, with the usual affection and reverence shown to the aged by the Arabs, he had for many years supported by his cheerful labour.

The pair lived together almost under the shadow of the stately ruined mosque of El Hakim, hard by the Bab-en-Nasr, in the beautiful city of Musr.* When Ali was well-nigh eighteen, his father died, and the day following was carried out for burial in the sepulchre of his ancestors, outside the city gate as you go up to the mountain of Gebel Mokattum. After his father's funeral, Ali returned sadly home, and sate in his little chamber buried in thought, until the red glow and after-glow of the glorious Egyptian sunset, streaming through the elegantly carved lattice-work of the window, had ceased to light up his dark yet ruddy face and handsome features, which so well contrasted with his snowy, many-folded turban, dark blue gown, and caftan of red and white striped silk. Then Ali lit his paper lantern, which hung from the roof formed of slit palm-trunks, and surveyed the few simple articles which had been his father's property, and of which he was now the sole and undisputed master.

* The Arab name of Cairo.

While thus engaged, he was roused by a gentle neighing below, which instantly reminded him that it was high time to feed the good and faithful animal which had long been his father's and his own means of subsistence. Ali put on his wide yellow leather slippers, ran downstairs, and out of the house, nearly knocking over in his haste a seller of sherbet, who was dispensing small metal vessels of that refreshing drink to a group of brown Arab Fellaheen, who had come in from their village near the Pyramids to sell a young camel, in order that they might satisfy the demands of their Turkish taskmasters. Hadji Mohammad was there, true gentleman and steadfast friend, and his brother, the bright-eyed, white-toothed urchin Omar, and Yusuf of the One Eye, and more whose names I cannot now recall. In a few minutes Ali returned, bearing a great bundle of rich, dark-green, juicy clover, which he had bought at the door of a Khan hard by to form the evening meal of his donkey, which was tethered in a little nook under the staircase. This donkey was a small one, but in his young master's opinion, and indeed in that of many other older and less prejudiced judges, he was one of the best donkeys in Musr. He was of a silver grey, was sleek from the care bestowed upon his coat, and had the hair about his legs cut, Cairene fashion, into a variety of fantastic patterns. The bray of a donkey is not commonly admired by the uninitiated, but it is sweet in the ears of an Egyptian donkey boy, just as the sound of the creaking Sakkeyeh is loved by the Nubian cultivator, and Ali was so much in love with the voice of his own beast that he had named him "Bulbul," that is to say, the nightingale.

Next morning Ali was in the streets betimes, not, truth to tell, without a certain sense of secret pleasurable excitement on account of his present state of complete independence, which tempered while it did not altogether destroy his sense of bereavement. He stood as usual near the door of a Mosque with Bulbul beside him, the latter resplendent with a new bridle and saddle of scarlet leather. Nor, indeed, had he to wait long, for a black slave girl, (slavery is everywhere rampant in Egypt, where one would think England ought to have *some* influence), regarding with favour the tall, handsome youth, called him for her mistress, who speedily mounted Bulbul straddlewise, and started for the bazaar, looking for all the world like an enormous balloon of black silk.

This lady, who was a great gossip, and very hard to please, was

near upon three hours making her purchases, most of which Ali carried home in the hood of his brown and white striped abbah, and scarcely had she re-entered her house when Bulbul was engaged by an Effendi, who visited the Mosque of Sultan Hassan, and then posted off to the Bath of Boulak, and afterwards ascended to the Citadel, where he had business with an officer of the Khedive's court. In fact, Ali and Bulbul were engaged the whole day, and at night the former found himself the owner of more money than he had ever taken before. And so it happened the next day, and the next, and the next, till Ali felt himself in a fair way to become rich, and was beginning to wonder whether it was not time for him to take to himself a little wife, and how many purses the old fruit-seller of the Bab-esh-Sha'reyeh would demand for his daughter, the well-formed, graceful Fatma. It was destined, however, that events would happen which would turn the current of his life.

One day, Bulbul was hired at his usual standing by an immensely fat old Jew, who rode the whole day from one money-changer's stall to another, using, I am sorry to say, very shocking language all the way, and abusing Ali and Bulbul because the latter was small-sized. At the end of the day, when the Jew returned home, he dismissed Ali with such a miserably small fare that he mentally resolved he would never let his donkey to him again.

"I never give backsheesh," added the Jew, whose name was Samweel, "when I ride an ass which isn't up to my weight; and this thing," he pursued, looking contemptuously at Bulbul, "is no bigger than my grandfather's cat." The very next day, Ali had scarcely left the house when another Jew sprang on the back of Bulbul. This Jew was a tall, lanky youth, with effeminate curls, and dressed in greasy robes of fur dyed red. He kept the pair out all day, and abused the poor donkey even worse than the fat Jew had done the day before. At night, poor Ali again received the smallest fare which could be proffered even by a Jew.

"Little donkey, small pay," said the young Jew, leering horribly, and this was all Ali got in return for his remonstrances. As the poor lad rode home, he felt out of spirits and out of temper, and he couldn't help thinking that he would give a good deal if his donkey were a little taller. Next morning, as Ali left home, he found an old Jew, with a white beard and short bandy legs, sitting on a stone close

to his own door, and holding an immense raw-boned black donkey by the bridle with one hand, while he beat his breast with the other.

"Alas!" cried the old Jew; "Alas! why was I ever born? Malediction light on the heads of all black Mecca donkeys, and on the heads of their fathers, and on the heads of their grandfathers. Alas! Alas! Alas! Alas!"

"O, thou! O Jew, what is the matter?" said Ali kindly. "Why do you curse the handiwork of God? What ails you? and what ails your black donkey?"

"Alas!" answered the Jew, and as he spoke the tears ran down his venerable beard and dirty furs, "Alas! young lord, I am old and well stricken in years, and the days of my pilgrimage are nearly over; and I had an ass, a small ass—an ass small even as thine is there; and being small I could easily mount him, though my infirmities are many and my legs short; but yesterday, as I tarried at Chibin, thieves came and stole him away, and left this donkey in his stead; a great donkey, a magnificent donkey, a powerful donkey—a donkey whose father was from Mecca, as thou seest; but in trying to mount him, my limbs, which are feeble, gave way, and I fell upon the ground. And now, having arrived at this city wherein I am a stranger, I know not whom I may trust, or I would strive to exchange this, my ass, for a smaller ass—an ass even such as that small animal of thine is."

Now, all the time the bandy-legged old Jew was speaking Ali's eyes were fixed upon the black donkey, and he thought within himself, what a fine thing it would be if he were to give Bulbul in exchange for him. It was true that he had promised his father before his death that he would never sell him, but then, "exchanging isn't selling," said Ali to himself, and so silenced his scruples of conscience.

"O, my lord," continued the Jew, "you seem to be a Sheik of donkeys, and to be of wisdom beyond your years, even as was King Suleyman in the flower of his youth; peradventure, then, you know of some one who would exchange a small donkey such as would suit an old man with short legs for a big one such as this."

Ali's face brightened.

"O, Jew," he answered, "I am myself willing to make the exchange; for by reason of the small size of this Bulbul of mine, I have now for two days gained small hire, and no backsheesh for myself."

"Now heaven be praised!" answered the Jew. "For I have found

an ass that will suit my aged limbs. But gently, my lord; you, who are a Sheik of donkeys, know full well that my Mecca donkey is well worth two of yours. You would not cheat one who is full of years and



infirmities. Say, then, what you will give more, and we will strike the bargain at once."

Ali went over the short list of his few possessions, and invited the Jew to walk up to see them. In less than half an hour the latter

again emerged, wearing a pair of new yellow slippers, and a red and white silk caftan over his own dirty one; he had also in his pouch five gold pieces, which was the sum total of Ali's savings; and he rode off upon Bulbul, carrying with him the new bridle and the red leather saddle, which had made the good little beast look so smart and attractive.

Ali witnessed the departure of Bulbul and his new master, who, by-the-by, laughed as he went away, in a very strange and ill-omened manner, with something like regret. The lad had a kind heart, and he feared that his little favourite might meet with some ill-treatment, and perhaps have scarce enough to eat. This, however, he determined should not be the case with his new acquisition; and he accordingly at once proceeded to give him some clover. This the new donkey devoured with great voracity, and at length, finding that no more was forthcoming, he made a sudden grab at Ali's arm, which he bit with great severity, tearing at the same time a hole in his new striped abbah. Ali did not strike the vicious brute in return (Mohammedans are in the main kind to animals), but he thought, with regret, of the gentle manner in which little Bulbul used to take his food from his hands, and of the grateful whinnying with which he was wont to thank his youthful master for his care.

CHAPTER II.

ON rising next morning, Ali's first care was to groom his new donkey; a proceeding which that animal resented with loud screams and violent stampings with his feet. Going out shortly afterwards into the street, Ali was recognised by the black slave girl already mentioned, and ordered to bring his donkey immediately, as her mistress would require him for several hours. When the lady came out, she demanded, with great asperity, where the pretty little donkey with the red saddle was. Ali was obliged to confess that he had exchanged it for the one he had brought with him; to which the lady replied that he was a fool; that she was in a hurry now, but that it was the last time she would ever employ him. Being then with great difficulty hoisted up into the saddle, the new donkey was off like a shot. Truth to tell, the jerk was so sudden that the lady was within an ace of being off too, which seemed by no means to improve her temper. But worse was to come. Of all the contradictory animals in the world, Ali's was apparently

the most so. After flying on at full speed, bumping up against every water-carrier, and crashing up against oil-jars, gullehs, and everything else made of crockery, he would suddenly throw his long ears back, put on the most injured-innocence expression of countenance possible, and could scarcely be induced to put one leg before another. If ever there was a finished hypocrite in the world, assuredly that donkey was one. Sometimes, spite of the most urgent tugging, he would insist on keeping on one side of the street; and then, without warning, he would suddenly race over to the other. Then he never saw another black donkey without neighing in a screaming way, peculiar to himself; and as this happened on an average every three minutes, the patience of both rider and attendant was, as may be imagined, nearly worn out. Besides this, he never met another donkey with a load of clover or carrots without taking a large bite at them, which brought upon the whole party the maledictions of the despoiled owner. Once he even made a rush as if with the fixed intention of dashing between the legs of a large camel, and it was all Ali could do to prevent the lady from being thrown off by the concussion. At length, leaving the bazaars and the more crowded streets, the rider ordered Ali to go to Shubra, where she had to transact some business. Ali, who was nearly tired out, was just congratulating himself that the worst must now be over, when, in the beautiful square of the Esbekeyeh, and exactly in front of an hotel where a number of howadjis* were lounging on a platform outside, his big black donkey suddenly threw himself with a loud scream upon another donkey only half his size, belonging to Hassanin, a personal friend of his own, who, with some twenty other donkey-boys, was waiting under the shade of the great sycamore figs to be hired. The assaulted donkey tried to escape, but in vain; his big antagonist reared high in the air, and then descending, fixed his teeth in his neck; while the lady, with a dismal screech, after trying to keep her balance for a moment, fell over the tail and full upon Ali, who was doing his best to support her, and bore him heavily to the ground. It was now poor Ali's turn to be assaulted. The lady, mad with rage, turned upon the unlucky lad with the fury of a tigress. She tore off his white turban flowered with yellow; she clawed his face with her long henna-tinted nails, till the blood flowed in torrents;

* Literally, "shopkeepers," the term universally applied by the Cairene Arabs to European travellers.

and then, suddenly rising, she mounted another donkey, and was off, without paying a single para of fare. All this time the howadjis upon the platform before the hotel were roaring with laughter, and as poor Ali slowly rose, turbanless and covered with dust and blood, he was assailed with the jeers and ridicule of his companions.

Hassanin alone remained silent, and affectionate and highly organised as he was, shed tears of sorrow for the misfortunes of his friend, such as no pain inflicted upon himself could have wrung from his eyes. Ali, as has been said, was a good-natured lad enough, but the trying scenes he had gone through, and the consciousness that he had been completely swindled, were on this occasion too much for him. It seemed as if he were possessed of the spirit of his new donkey, for, stung by some insult, he threw himself upon the nearest person in the crowd, who chanced to be a mere looker-on, and proceeded to cuff him vigorously. The bystanders, as is usual with Arabs, at once separated the two combatants; when one of the Khedive's new policemen, called, it was said, by a bandy-legged Jew who was amongst the throng, arriving on the spot, Ali was arrested and dragged to the Zaptayeh, where the court was at that moment sitting.

The Effendi who presided over this court was a little, fat, one-eyed Turk, very much pitted with small-pox, and with every kind of crime and baseness stamped upon his ignoble face. He sate on the corner of a divan, continually taking snuff, and nursing one of his feet, which was covered with a dirty white stocking, upon his lap. Sometimes he heard a bit of one charge, and then he heard a bit of another, but in all cases the result was the same; for every accused person who did not, himself or by a friend, lay a pretty handsome backsheesh behind a cushion which was placed at the Effendi's side was quite sure to be sent to prison. Poor Ali, even if he had known the wretch with whom he had to deal, had no money; and long before the facts of the case were stated he was condemned to spend two months in the common gaol. This prison was a horrible place, full of the worst thieves and the scum of Cairo, as well as of great numbers of innocent and unjustly condemned persons, and it swarmed with vermin.

Ali found himself in a long, low, overcrowded room, and here for some three hours he sate with his head bowed down in his lap, thinking of his dead father, of his own folly and discontent, and of his little lost Bulbul. At length at the sunset hour, above the noises of the

prison and the subdued hum of the busy city outside, a voice arose high, shrill, and clear, and coming as if from the sky itself. It was the voice of the blind Mueddin, on the minaret of a Mosque hard by the prison wall, calling the faithful to prayer. Then Ali arose, divested himself of his outward garment and laid it on the ground, turned himself as nearly as he could judge towards the holy city of Mecca, in far-off Arabia, and then prostrated himself with his forehead on the ground, in adoration before the God of heaven and earth. Wherever he is, and whatever be the surrounding circumstances, a good Mohammedan is never ashamed to pray. Scarcely had Ali finished his devotions, when he heard his name called several times, and going to the iron grating, before which a sentry was pacing up and down, he saw to his inexpressible joy the dear face of his friend Hassanin. Hassanin, whose donkey, by-the-way, had been very severely bitten, had brought Ali a present of dates, and Yusuf Effendi oranges. He informed him that he had taken charge of the big donkey, and had entrusted him to a boy named Mohammad, who had agreed to feed him on condition of receiving three-fourths of the sum he should obtain for his hire.

These were more favourable terms than Ali could have looked for; and he thankfully assented to them. Much more thankful, however, was he for the love and kindness of his faithful friend. Hassanin then departed; but he came almost daily, by means of small bribes administered to the sentries (everything in tyrannically-governed Egypt is managed by bribes), to cheer and console his friend; so that the two months passed quicker than Ali had anticipated, and at the end of that time he found himself once more at liberty.

CHAPTER III.

WHEN Ali had taken a delicious hot bath, paid for with money advanced by the faithful Hassanin, he returned home to the Bab-en-Nasr. Rushing upstairs, he found his room occupied by a party of swarthy Persian merchants, who were engaged in unpacking their stores of turquoises; and then discovered that the landlord, imagining he had run away, had let his little chamber, and had seized his few little remnants of property for arrears of rent.

Ali turned sadly away from his old home, and went in search of Mohammad, from whom he received his donkey, which looked half-

starved and in a miserable condition. So far from Mohammad having anything to refund, he declared that he had only let the donkey once, and that on that occasion he had severely kicked his rider, who had gone away in a rage without paying anything. Mohammad added that he himself was considerably out of pocket for the expenses of the donkey's keep, and expected to have his losses made good. To this Ali assented, and then rode off in very low spirits.

All that day he tried to let his donkey, but tried in vain. No one would hire him. One man said, laughing, that he never rode a *gamoûs* (buffalo); another wouldn't trust a lad who starved his beast; a third, that if he rode an animal of such a size he preferred a horse; and so on, and so on, till Ali's heart died within him. He next tried to find his friend, but Hassanfn had not yet returned from the Pyramids, to which he had accompanied a young foreign gentleman who had arrived the previous evening; so, to pass away the time and to obtain a little rest, Ali lay down to sleep in the courtyard of a small ruined mosque: first firmly securing the bridle of his donkey round one of his feet, in order to prevent the animal's escape. How long he slept he did not know, but ere long he was aroused by feeling himself being dragged rapidly along the ground. When thoroughly awakened, he found that the donkey had made off, and was then clearing the precincts of the mosque. Ali tried in vain to extricate himself. The leather bridle, to which his foot was attached, was strong, and refused to give way. Once in the open street, the black donkey charged at full gallop, making no more of the weight he was dragging than if it had been a kitten. At length, when at full speed, the leather suddenly gave way, and Ali was flung with his head against a large stone, and lay insensible, while the donkey pursued his headlong course, and was immediately out of sight.

When the poor lad came to himself, for he had been completely stunned, and, indeed, well-nigh killed by the force of the blow he had received, he found himself lying on a clean white mat in the house of Hassanfn, tended by that faithful friend; and with another face bending over, which was very dear to him. It was that of a young English gentleman, whom he had served the previous year.

This fine boy, on leaving Eton—that nursery of so much that is true and noble—had come to Egypt, and had been on a shooting excursion with Ali (who, like many of his craft, spoke English fluently), and with

Bulbul to the Birket-el-Keroun, in the beautiful district of the Fyoom. Charles Morton, for that was the Etonian's name, was passionately fond of shooting; not of the indiscriminate slaughter of tame hares and half-domesticated pheasants, driven up to the muzzle of his gun, but of the pursuit of wild animals, amidst the wild and beautiful scenes of nature. While in the Fyoom, young Morton was suddenly laid on his back with a violent attack of fever, and, as he lay in an Arab hut, had been nursed by Ali with the tenderness and affection of a brother. For three days and three nights, Ali scarcely ever left his side. Conduct, indeed, like this is characteristic of the Arab race. As the soul of the "civilized" Turk grovels below, so the soul of the Arab soars far above the trammels of the Mohammedan religion. In the Arab character there is the ring of the old, old generous patriarchal times; and he who would seek in their mingled good and evil for the counterparts of such characters as Esau and Joseph, David and Jonathan, and other Old Testament personages, should look for them amongst the modern Arabians.

On his return to Cairo, Charles Morton was summoned to England by the death of a relative, before he could devise a plan of rewarding Ali for his self-denying kindness and fidelity. Again returned to Egypt, he had just heard from Hassanin of his Arab friend's misfortunes, when, attracted by the crowd, he found the object of his inquiries lying senseless upon the ground.

Now there was at this time in Musr a certain Englishman, holding an official position, who was a humane man, a hater of tyranny, and a lover of justice. To him Charles Morton repaired, and with much affectionate warmth stated the case of Ali. Inquiries were set on foot. It was proved that the fat old Jew, and the scraggy young Jew, and the bandy-legged Jew were swindlers in league with each other. It was proved that they had already cheated a donkey-boy at Mansourah, with the aid of the big black donkey, which they had trained to aid them in their nefarious practices. It was proved also they had tried to sell the black donkey, which had galloped back to the house of one of the number. With these facts in his possession, the English official sought an interview with a Pasha high in office under the Khedive, and begged that justice might be done; adding, in a politic manner, that Charles Morton was the son of a celebrated Indian General, who was much esteemed by Her Majesty the Queen. Red tape


and circumlocution did their worst, but the Englishman remained firm; and Ali, in less than a month, received his dear little Bulbul, adorned with a new saddle and bridle, as a free gift from the hands of his young English friend. Grown wiser by the misfortunes he had undergone, Ali is now the happiest and most contented donkey-boy in all Musr. The Persians having disposed of their turquoises, returned to their own country, and Ali again hired his old room in the Bab-en-Nasr; but he stands with Bulbul in the lane leading to the excellent Hotel du Nil, and is in much request amongst the howadjis.

The last time I heard of the three Jews, they had chains on their legs, and were cutting stones in the Government quarries at Toorah. As for the big black donkey, he has long ago been made into German sausages.

GREVILLE J. CHESTER.

WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY—*continued.*

MOSAICS.

“ THINK we will go to-day, and see the famous mosaic for which Florence is celebrated. You have heard of it perhaps, Blanche, or Kitty?”

KITTY. I don't know; I don't think we have.

BLANCHE. Yes, indeed, I have. Aunt Maggie has a brooch of it. It is all made of tiny little bits stuck together; and it is a picture of the Colosseum at Rome.

MYSELF. That is not *Florentine* mosaic, then; it is Roman, and only made in Rome. The mosaic which is made in Florence is far more beautiful. I have got a bracelet of it, which I will fetch to show you.

CHARLIE (*starting up*). Let me go, Miss Hay. Mayn't I get it?

MYSELF. Yes, Charlie, if you will listen while I tell you where it is to be found.

BLANCHE. Oh, Miss Hay! He will be sure to drop it; let *me* go. Charlie is so careless!

MYSELF. But I think he will be careful when he knows that he might break it if he let it fall. Won't you, Charlie?

CHARLIE. Yes, I promise. Blanche is always so cross.

MYSELF. Blanche was careful of my things, that was all. Here is the key of the top drawer in the chest. You must turn it gently to

the right, remember, and you will see a long card box just in front. Bring it down, please, and leave the key in the drawer.

CHARLIE. Yes. I promise I won't drop it; and Charlie darted out of the room.

BLANCHE (*primly*). Miss Spencer never could trust him to touch anything, Miss Hay. It would have been much safer to have let me go.

MYSELF. You must allow me to be the judge of that, Blanche. If Charlie is never trusted he will most likely never care to be trustworthy. I would rather have my bracelet broken than let him think that I did not believe him, when he said he would take care of it.

Blanche opened her eyes at this, but said nothing; and Charlie reappeared a moment after, with a very solemn face, and the box held tightly clasped in both hands.

"Thank you, Charlie," I said, taking it from him. "I was sure you would keep your promise;" and I opened the box, and showed my pupils the bracelet. They crowded to look at it.

KITTY. How beautiful! It is like seven brooches joined together.

BLANCHE. I don't think it is so *very* pretty after all. Not so pretty as mamma's gold one with diamonds in it, or Aunt Maggie's Indian snake.

MYSELF. Perhaps not, Blanche, but it is a beautiful work of art, all the same; and if you examine it you will see that each of the medallions that you call brooches is different. However, it was not so much for the beauty of the thing that I showed it to you; it was that you might see and know something of what Florence is famous for.

KITTY. There is such a lovely lily of the valley there, and a tiny rose, and, oh, such a forget-me-not!

MYSELF. Yes, and here is a bouquet which is all white; a camellia and two white rose-buds.

KITTY. And there is a red picotee, with green leaves.

BLANCHE. And a pink and yellow rose! How do they paint the stones, Miss Hay?

MYSELF. They don't paint them at all; they are all natural colours.

BOTH GIRLS. Natural colours!

MYSELF. Yes; some are made of porphyry, some of jasper, some of verde antique, &c. But I will tell you about our visit to the *Accademia delle Belle Arti*, or Academy of Fine Arts, in Florence, and then you will see what I saw.

The walls of the first room are entirely fitted up with shelves, and on these are ranged the different stones and marbles of which the mosaics are made. One compartment was filled with one colour, another with another, and so on. There was coral for the red picotees, and lapis-lazuli, which is a lovely blue, from Persia, and jasper, and malachite from Russia, besides many stones found in Italy. For instance, do you see the delicately-shaded green leaves of this white jessamine? That stone is found in the bed of the Arno. I saw one which had been cut in half, and the different tints of green in it were beautiful. You see there are no joins in that leaf, the shading is all in the one piece of stone.

CHARLIE. Have we got such stones in England?

MYSELF. Not such beautiful ones; but we have fine jasper and agate. Have you never picked up any by the sea-side?

CHARLIE. Oh, yes; and I've got one real agate marble.

BLANCHE. But our stones would not make such beautiful flowers as these.

MYSELF. No, they are mostly only grey and brown; and the red and green, though very handsome, are not so finely shaded as these. Besides, I don't think English workmen would understand how to cut them. You have got an inkstand in the hall, of Derbyshire mosaic, but if you compare it with my bracelet you will see how coarsely the bits are joined, and how little delicate shading it can boast of.

KITTY. Did you see them at work?

MYSELF. Yes. We were taken into a room upstairs where they were very busy, cutting, and drawing, and joining. They have an outline of the flower, fruit, or whatever they are going to represent, drawn with a clear sharp pencil on white paper; each piece being then cut out, and drawn on the stone chosen. The brilliant marbles, jaspers, &c., of which I have told you, are of course too valuable to be wasted, and are only used in very thin slices. The stones are sawn into the right shapes by means of a fine wire, and the edges are ground smooth, and worked down with emery powder at a wheel, till they fit exactly. Look at the joins in the bracelet; they are hardly visible.

CHARLIE. How is it all joined together at the back?

MYSELF. There is nearly half an inch of white cement, in which all the pieces are set, and when the pattern is completed the cement is

planed down quite smooth, and a slab of this black stuff, which is slate, put at the back to make all neat and secure."

KITTY. How clever and beautiful!

BLANCHE. And what a time it must take!

MYSELF. Yes; you may fancy how much labour and eyesight, and fineness of finger are wanted for the work. It takes a great many different hands too; one for the drawing, one for the cutting, another for the delicate parts of the joining, and so on. This is what makes it so expensive. One of the workmen was deaf and dumb, and very skilled; he had been there from his childhood.

CHARLIE. How *could* he be taught?

MYSELF. I think, Charlie, when God takes away one sense He often makes up for it by sharpening the others. The sight and touch of this poor man were evidently very acute; far more so than in other people.

BLANCHE. Do they make other things besides brooches and bracelets?

MYSELF. Oh, yes! all kinds of ornaments; boxes, cabinets, and tables. One of the rooms was full of them. We saw one small round table which looked as if a wreath of vine leaves, with bunches of white grapes, had been laid upon it, it was so beautifully and naturally done; and there is a chapel in Florence, the walls of which are covered with this lovely mosaic, and more splendid than anything you can imagine. The armorial bearings of all the cities in Tuscany are inlaid there; the *giglio*, or lily of Florence, being, I thought, the most beautiful.

BLANCHE. I suppose that was white marble?

MYSELF. No, Blanche. The Florentine lily used to be white, but it is now red; and the change is said to have been made when Florence was the centre of so many wars. I have often thought that a pretty poem might be written upon this reddened lily, which is, however, not a real lily, but the three-petaled iris, like the *fleur-de-lys* of France. It is made of different shades of coral and cornelian.

PICTURES.

"I always thought Florence was full of pictures," said Blanche, the next time we assembled for a talk, "but you have not told us anything about them yet, Miss Hay."

MYSELF. No, because I wanted you to have some little idea of

what Florence itself was outside, before I said much about what it contains. But certainly pictures ought to come before mosaics. Will you like to hear about them now?

"Yes, so much!" in an eager tone from Blanche, and "Yes, please!" more faintly from Kitty, while Charlie said nothing, only looked blank.

I did not want poor Charlie to do penance, so I brought out a quantity of photographs of the principal pictures which had pleased me, together with some small coloured lithographs of Italian costumes, and told him he might look at them while I told his sisters what they wanted to know. So he took them all to the table, while we sat round the fire, for it was still very cold.

"Now," I said, "it is nonsense to try for a moment to give you anything like an idea of the pictures I saw even in one gallery at Florence. We went every morning for a whole fortnight, from nine till two into one gallery, the Pitti, and by that means gained a tolerable knowledge of most of the pictures there."

Blanche drew a long breath. "How many pictures are there?"

MYSELF. Well, I could tell by referring to my catalogue, but about five hundred, I suppose. Then there is another much larger gallery, which contains one thousand prints alone, which are not shown except by great favour, and some of the finest pictures in the world.

BLANCHE (*discontentedly*). Then it is of no use talking about the pictures at all. I don't care about hearing how many there are, if I can't know what they are like.

MYSELF. Well, Blanche, I will, at any rate, tell you what the Pitti Palace is like; or that wing of it where the pictures are, and how we enjoyed our mornings there; and then I will undertake to give you some idea of one of the finest pictures in each of the two galleries.

BLANCHE (*reviving*). Oh! thank you, Miss Hay. Please begin, we are so late this evening.

MYSELF. We used to go to the Pitti directly after breakfast, and get there about half-past nine, soon after it was opened. After giving up our parasols to a very gorgeous-looking porter dressed in the royal livery, we went up a stone staircase, passed through an ante-room, and, opening a baize door, found ourselves in the gallery. It consists of six principal rooms, opening out of one another, and several smaller side rooms, all full of pictures. Have you seen the Royal Academy, any of you?

KITTY. Yes, mamma took me once when I went to London with her to the dentist.

MYSELF. Well, you know that there are rooms there full of pictures, but there is nothing pretty in the rooms themselves. You only care to look at the pictures. In the Pitti it is different. The rooms are splendid, with high arched roofs all painted exquisitely with flowers and figures. The walls are hung with crimson damask, and other colours adapted for showing off pictures. The floors are of inlaid wood, and in each room are two or more tables of the most costly mosaic. I had heard the rooms often described, but had not in the least realized what they were before seeing them.

BLANCHE. And the pictures?

MYSELF. They are nearly all worth careful study; and many are so beautiful, that you feel as if you must look again and again before you can take in their beauty.

BLANCHE. You said you would describe one.

MYSELF. Not quite so fast, Blanche. Kitty wants to hear a little more about other things first.

When we had looked for about half an hour, we used to go downstairs, and out in front of the palace to rest our eyes and hear the band play. The king was there, and the band used to play to him while he was at breakfast.

"How nice!"

MYSELF. It was nicer for us, I fancy, than for him; for, whereas he was inside with the windows closed and the *jalousies* carefully shut to keep out the sun, we used to sit at our ease in the fine air, and watch the soldiers relieve guard, and feast our eyes as well as our ears. The band was a good one, and the uniform gay, and the whole scene brilliant and regal-looking. The music did not last more than half an hour, and then we went back to our pictures again.

And now, which shall I describe among so many? Let me see. The famous "Madonna della Seggiola" is there; the Virgin and Child you know, with S. John, a print of which hangs in the library here. It is perhaps the most lovely of all the Pitti pictures, but, as you know it by the print, I will choose another, and I think it shall be the "Fates," by Michael Angelo.

BLANCHE. I thought he was only a sculptor.

MYSELF. He was the first sculptor of his day, the first indeed of any

day, but he painted wonderfully as well. You were learning about the "Fates" the other day, in your mythology.

KITTY and BLANCHE. Oh, yes! Clotho, Lachesis, and Atropos.

MYSELF. Quite right. Lachesis gave the word, Clotho spun the thread, and Atropos cut it with her shears. What did I tell you it signified?

BLANCHE and KITTY. Human life.

MYSELF. Yes; the dim idea of the heathens about life and mortality. Well, this picture represents the three Fates as three old women. The figures are only half length, but the faces and attitudes are wonderful. They all stand facing you—Lachesis on the right, with her mouth open, and an evil, repulsive face, gives the fatal word. Clotho in the middle, the tallest of the three, and holding the distaff in her right hand and the thread she has spun in her left, has a fine face, full of pity and expostulation. She turns to the third sister, who stands a little behind, and looks at her over her shoulder; she hopes at least for some delay; she is unwilling to cut that strong, straight thread, while yet only half of it is spun out. But Atropos has the scissors in her hand, she is already about to cut. She has stern, cruel eyes, and you can see that she understands neither pity nor sorrow. You feel sure that in another moment all will be over.

The whole group is most impressive. The women's faces, almost more like men than women, have a kind of awful beauty about them, in spite of their wrinkles and fleshless cheeks and the corpse-like head-dress of white linen.

BLANCHE. You said there was another picture you would describe. Please tell me about it. I like hearing about the pictures more than anything.

MYSELF. We must get into the other gallery for that; but first, here is a photograph which is as good a reproduction of the "Fates" as I could get.

BLANCHE (*after a long examination*). I don't think I should have seen all you say in it at first, but I think I do now. I think it is a very melancholy picture.

MYSELF. Yes, Blanche, melancholy enough, because there is in it no recognition of a Divine Hand, which holds the thread of our affairs. It only speaks of a relentless fate. Think what it would be if our lives and the lives and lot of those whom we love depended upon human

beings like ourselves, and not on the All-wise and All-loving Father! As we look at the picture it is almost an effort to realize the Christian truth underlying this dark Pagan belief, so vividly has the painter brought out the idea which he wanted to represent.

BLANCHE. It must be dreadful!

MYSELF. Until you turn away and think of that sentence in the Creed, "The resurrection of the dead and the life everlasting," it *is* dreadful.

(*To be continued.*)

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.



MY DEAR TOBY,

You tell me that you want to begin to make a collection of moths and butterflies; and you say, by-the-way, that you don't fancy collecting flowers, or even fishing, so much as your present hobby, which you confess to be butterflies and moths. I will help you as far as I can in what you want; but let me take the opportunity of remarking that a person who has to do with anything in the country ought to make a point of knowing at least something of everything in the country. You cannot manage your collection of butterflies and moths without knowing something of the plants on which the caterpillars feed, and over which the perfect insects flutter; neither can you thoroughly master the fish without knowing the habits of the insects on which they feed. You must, therefore, not depreciate the value of other branches of learning for the sake of putting your hobby in the front place. In fact, to put your hobby in the front place you will find some knowledge of the others to be necessary. How about your moths and butterflies? Do you know anything at all about them? Could you tell a butterfly from a moth? or the caterpillar of one from the caterpillar of the other? Perhaps I am presuming too much if I suppose you know that caterpillars, and moths, and butterflies, and chrysalises, are very closely connected: perhaps your idea of collecting has been suggested by the sight of a glass case against the wall, with a lot of specimens pinned flat against a sheet of cork or cardboard. At any rate, we will begin at the very beginning. Butterflies and moths, Toby, are insects. Or go back further, and say

they are animals—living things, which are called insects because they have bodies chopped in half, so to speak, and the two halves connected only by ligaments or tendons. A wasp is an insect. You will soon see why, from what I have said, if you look at his body. But we do not call a wasp a moth or a butterfly, and yet it is an insect. What, then, is the difference between a wasp or a dragon-fly or a beetle and a moth or butterfly? It is just this—the moths and butterflies have all *scales on their wings*; other insects have not. And it is for this reason that they are called Lepidoptera, from two Greek words, one of which means a scale and the other a wing. Perhaps, Toby, you don't understand what I mean by *scales*. Look at a moth or butterfly: its wings are covered with a sort of dust, and if you rub it it comes off, and leaves the wing transparent. The dust, you see, is really a collection of *scales* laid on the wing, like the scales on a fish's side; and it is these scales which make the beautiful colours on the wings of the Lepidoptera. Look at the wings of a fly or wasp. They are simply gauze. There are no scales on them. So far, then, you have learnt how to distinguish a moth or butterfly from any other insect; but how about the difference between a moth and a butterfly? Look once more at this butterfly. Jutting out from his head are two thread-like horns; one from each side. These, Toby, are called *antennæ*. Both moths and butterflies have them, and the distinguishing mark between a butterfly and a moth is that the *antennæ* of butterflies have *knobs* at their ends, while those of moths have not. Moths and butterflies have always four wings, and these grow from the front half of the body of these insects. This front half is called the *thorax*, Toby, and I shall have occasion to mention it when we come to killing the victims of your net. Now that we are finding a description of the animals we are going to catch, it may be as well to go on so far as is necessary to learning how to *name* your insects when you have caught them, and, therefore, don't be impatient if we try to get the drudgery over first before we go out to catch them. Just as I told you about flowers, that you should gather leaves, stem, roots, flower, and fruit, and that no specimen is perfect without all, so, in collecting butterflies and moths, you must be careful to get perfect specimens. The *antennæ* must survive. All four *wings*, and the *edges* of each wing, should be kept perfect, and not jagged or bruised. The *scales*, that is to say the markings or colouring of the wings, must not be rubbed off. The

number of legs, also, is an important feature in the description of a specimen. In fact, the less you knock about the specimens you catch, the more valuable they will be, and the easier to name. And this *naming* of specimens is not nearly so formidable an undertaking as it seems at first sight. I remember myself having a dread of it as of a thing never to be attained; so much so, that I collected specimens long before I knew how to *name* them, or even attempted to do so. The fact is, that you have to recognise a butterfly, or a moth, just as you recognise people. Imagine that you are making a collection of human beings. You will find no difficulty in classing a given friend under some such heading as the long-legged, the blue-eyed, the dark-haired. It is just the same principle that you have to adopt in all collections of natural objects. The first names that you must fix in your memory are the names of the parts of the insect's body, so that it may come as easy to you to talk about moths with long antennæ as about men with long legs. Moths and butterflies are easier to name than flowers, because the distinctions are more marked. I said just now, Toby, that you must know the names of the parts of the insects' bodies first. The books will tell you the rest, if they are good ones. If you cannot find your way in the book, take some butterfly whose name you already know, for instance, a white cabbage butterfly, and carefully compare it with the description given in the book. You will find that you will accustom yourself sooner by this method to recognising the insects by their scientific descriptions. So much for the tedious process of naming your specimens when you have got them; and now, Toby, how are you to catch them? I take up my old diary, from which I have quoted to you so often, and I find this entry: "*Went out mothing with D—— to W. woods: found the big drive already treaced.*" I can recall the expedition, Toby, very well. It happened somehow on this wise. D——, a brother, and myself were making a joint collection of moths and butterflies, and I do not remember any pursuit that dragged us into so many scrapes, or a collection that suffered so much at the hands of fate. Well, certainly the most exciting part of our war upon Lepidoptera, because, I suppose, it involved being out in the dark, was going in pursuit of moths by night. Many scoldings we got for coming in with our feet wet through, after having run among the grass on the lawn and in the hay-field. This method of capture was simply running after any insects we might see

flying, and grabbing at them with a green gauze net. But I will get on, and tell you what happened on the evening in question. We had heard a rumour, from some members of a field naturalist society in the neighbouring town, that at W—— woods had appeared an insect in great profusion, which had not been seen there for seven years before. The height of our ambition was immediately to catch some of the precious specimens. We therefore got leave to stay out late on this occasion, and made our preparations for a great night attack. First, the bull's-eye lantern was pulled out, and the reflector carefully burnished. It was most important to have it in complete working order. Then the boxes were to be seen to. The old stock was insufficient; odd lids which would not fit other boxes seemed plentiful. And this was not difficult to account for. The boxes we used were wooden pill-boxes which we got from the chemist's, and as they shut up one inside each other their sizes were very different. Well, we got some new sets of boxes. Our nets were all right. Common butterfly nets, green gauze over a rim of cane or wire, were what we used. But the treacle had to be mixed. A large old pickle bottle served the purpose best, because the mouth of it was wide and would admit the brush easily. The rum was procured from the village public-house, the browner and more strong smelling the better for our purpose, and well mixed up with the treacle. Some rum was put into a medicine bottle to take with us in order to replenish the treacle from time to time as the intoxicating fumes of the first dose evaporated in the night air. The brush was a common hog's bristle one, such as painters use. Thus equipped, with a Sunday-school teacher, I remember, as companion and protector, we started on our four-mile walk to the woods. There was some sport to be had on the way, and so, whenever we came to a likely hedge or bush, one held the lantern turned steadily on one spot, while the second beat the bush to drive the insects out. These naturally flew towards the light, and there number three of the party was ready to make a pounce with his net. The captured insect was transferred to one of the wooden pill-boxes, and we proceeded to the next "beat." In this fashion we gradually got over the four miles of road and entered the wood. Now was to be the grand battue. We made for the big drive, that is to say the chief road down the wood. On each side the oak trees stood, offering their stems temptingly to the treacle brush.

"Let us get down to the bottom of the wood, treacle up the hill, and take them on our way down," said D—.

This we did, and approached the first tree to treacle it. We were too late in the field; other naturalists had been tempted out by the dry yet dark night, both of which qualifications are desirable for "treacling," and had carefully set their traps up the very drive which we proposed to treacle. They, however, seemed to have used some preparation of sugar different to treacle. It was thicker and more sticky, and I think must have been sugar and water boiled to a syrup. Well, there were the traps, and the bait was successful; moths of all sizes, and various shades of colour, were feasting side by side on the rum and sugar. We made no delay to appropriate to our own use another drive, not so good as the big one, because the trees by the side were rather smaller than what we fancied for our purpose. We laid our traps; the scent of the rum pervaded the drive. With the brush we dabbed on the bark of the tree, about three or four feet from the ground, some of the mixture, making a splash about a foot long by three inches broad. This we did to every other tree up each side of the drive. Arrived at the top, we spent half-an-hour in beating, as we had done on the road, and then started on our back journey, examining the traps as we returned. We had good sport that evening; the patches of treacle were thickly studded with the greedy moths and flies. How, you ask, did we get them off the treacle without sticking their sides and wings and our fingers, and so damaging the specimens. It was in this way, Toby. One put a net just underneath the patch of treacle, the other turned the bull's-eye lantern full on the patch, and the feeding moths, one by one, rolled off drunk and stupefied into the net. The combination of the rum and the strong light stupefied them completely. It only remained to pick them carefully out of the net, and transfer them to the pill-boxes. Such, Toby, was the method of capture which we found to answer best. You must note that we found wet nights of very little use, that is to say, when all the foliage of the bushes and trees was wet with rain. We found that the light coming through a window from the candles and fire in the room attracted moths to the outside of the house, and there we used to wait for them. I must also confess to having been one of the party when a bedroom window was open nearly all one summer night, being used as a lantern into which the moths should fly, attracted by the light. We found it rather successful I remember.

But night is not the only time in which moths fly. Some fly by day too, and beating bushes, as I described above, in the daytime is an excellent plan for getting the day moths as well as some butterflies. But, as a general rule, if a butterfly is in a roving mood he shows himself conspicuously, and does not wait to be beat up much. He seems to be more timid than the moths, and flies away if you go too near him. As a general rule, I used to "walk up" butterflies, that is, I walked through a clover-field or a hay-field, and just swept the grass round me lightly with my net. This I generally found sufficient to start butterflies. The secret, however, of getting butterflies is to find a spot where the plants grow on which they have fed in their caterpillar state. For instance, about a large bed of nettles you will generally find one or more small tortoiseshell butterflies; and in the same way you will find that, to get other butterflies, you must go to their haunts, and this involves reading a little before you start on your journey. Sunny banks, such as railway banks, the sunny side of a lane, clover-fields, hay-fields, the skirts of a wood, or the broad drives in it which the sun can reach, heaps of rubbish about ruins, and the sunny sides of roads, *upland* pasture fields, such as *downs*—all are fashionable resorts of the Lepidopterous world.

It is a lamentable fact, Toby, that you cannot keep a live collection of butterflies and moths. They have to be killed, and the question arises how you are to do it with least pain to the "poor insect." This is hardly the place to enter into a long disquisition as to how far insects feel pain; but I think you need not be scrupulous, Toby, for modern science has refuted Shakespeare's notorious remark on the subject—

"The poor beetle, that we tread upon,
In corporal sufferance finds a pang as great
As when a giant dies."

The fact is just the reverse, for insects have no brains nor any single great centre of nerves. However, you have to kill them, and, at any rate, one method is more cruel by nature than another. *Don't* stick a pin through a butterfly and leave it there till it dies of starvation. It may not be causing it very great pain to run a pin through it. If it did it would die much sooner than it does; but the sight is demoralizing and horrid; so kill your insects as quickly and quietly as possible. If your captive be a butterfly or a moth which has a very thin body, give

it a nip under the wings with your forefinger and thumb—pinch his thorax smartly, in fact, and death will be instantaneous, and you will not injure the specimen. In the case of the fat-bodied moths this plan would hardly do so well, because you could not pinch them hard enough without injuring the body of the insect as a specimen: these you must poison. There are lots of poisons in the world, all of them dangerous, as their name implies. Chloroform will kill them, as it will kill anything; prussic acid on the tip of the pin will kill them, as it will anything; but both of these are horribly dangerous things for you to have, Toby, so I forbid them completely. You may try choking them with sulphur matches, if you like. I did it at one time, but gave it up, as the sulphur injured the colour of the wings. I used to put the victim in a tin-box, and striking a match, popped it half way into the box while alight, and before the sulphur, which burnt blue in the old matches, was burnt out. This certainly killed them, but damaged them as specimens, and the fumes of the matches were disagreeable to the operator as well as his victim. Perhaps the best plan, on the whole, is to kill big moths by bruised laurel leaves. Get a glass jar, such as those in which French plums are sold, and half fill it with laurel leaves that you have chopped up and pounded and bruised; then put your moth in and shut the lid. The victim is poisoned, and by a sort of prussic acid which is naturally secreted in the plant. This can only be dangerous if you eat the leaves yourself, and as they are very nasty you are not likely to do so. But still you should wash your hands after handling the bruised leaves much.

Well, Toby, though you can't keep butterflies and moths alive when they have got their wings, still you can keep a menagerie of caterpillars and of chrysalises, and this is perhaps the most interesting part of collecting. To keep up a large establishment of this sort is really quite an undertaking. You have to know not only what to give to each caterpillar to eat, but you have to get it; and that is not always so very easy. I can imagine a person with a great deal of leisure and a garden getting a great deal of fun and pleasant occupation out of a good big caterpillar menagerie. There would be their homes each to be swept and cleaned every morning, and fresh food to be got at least once a day, and the water in which the branch of food is put kept always fresh. Such a person might have a corner of the garden

devoted to the growing of the wild flowers and plants on which the caterpillars were to feed. Then the soil at the bottom of each compartment must be kept just sufficiently dry when the caterpillar has departed to his underground abode for the winter: in fact, to keep up a large establishment of the sort would be a very amusing occupation. But I hear you ask me, "Where from, and how am I to get the caterpillars to put in my boxes?" Well, Toby, the fact is that you must hunt for them, and you must know where to go for them by reading. Some trees are more tenanted than others by caterpillars: willows, oaks, and hawthorn trees, are specially favoured, but all more or less have their occupants. The best way to catch them is to take a sheet with you and lay it out underneath the tree, then shake the tree and the caterpillars will fall off on the sheet below. But caterpillars do not only feed on trees, they have their favourite plants and flowers. Perhaps the search after caterpillars, except by shaking the trees, is not very fruitful, but you can pick them up while hunting for other things. At any rate, it is advisable to know the *likely* spots and the likely plants, so that if you do come across them you may think it worth while to stoop and see if you can find any caterpillars about them. I cannot pretend to give you full instructions, Toby, as to where to find or how to keep caterpillars and butterflies and moths. If I had time and the ability to do it, only a book could hold all that there would be to be said. I can only suggest in a letter what *may* lead you to the books, of which many, and good ones on the subject, have been written. You see, Toby, from what I have told you already, that you will have plenty to do if you ever set up as an entomologist: you will have work night and day all through the spring and summer months; but I can give you work for the winter months too. Then is the time to hunt for chrysalises. Here, again, you must know by reading, until you get it by practice, which trees you ought to go to. The way you go to work is simply to grub about at the foot of the tree, just where it starts from the ground, in all the nooks and crannies, and collections of leaves at its base. Don't be rough about it, or you will bruise them; and don't be careless, or you will miss them. Suddenly you come across a chrysalis. Wonderful! you think, unless you have read and know why. Careful and observant men, before you or me, Toby, have noticed what trees certain moths and butterflies feed on when in their caterpillar state; they have noticed


that when the caterpillar has grown to his full size he descends the trunk of the tree and buries himself in a snug little corner or cranny at the foot of the tree; and, mark you, he knows very well which side of the tree to choose. He does not select the *damp* side, where the stream of water from every shower will drown him as it runs down the old trunk, but a nice cosy dry corner, where neither too much damp nor too much sun can get at him, and there he spends the winter. Sometimes he spins himself a cocoon, and is to be found in the recess he has carved for himself just behind the bark of some tree. A little practice will make you know the sort of thing to expect, and you will throw your eye professionally over any given tree, and soon detect if there is anything to be found. Nay, even your nose may be of service in the pursuit, as you will find if you ever chance upon a willow with a goat-moth about it. I have told you now, Toby, how you can get some amusement and instruction out of butterflies and moths. Expect disappointments; nothing is free from them. The caterpillar which you have carefully reared, perhaps from his egg state, may possibly, nay, often does, produce a chrysalis which gets lighter and lighter, and at last is only a home for the ichneumon flies, whose grubs have been preying on your favourite's body. Your whole collection of butterflies and moths may come to an untimely end. Read this note from my diary, and beware of young brothers: "*D— was looking through the collection, and had got all the drawers laid out upon the floor to put new camphor in, when, while he was out of the room, C— came in and amused himself by putting a foot into each tray, stepping from drawer to drawer.*" Read this next, and beware of housemaids: "*Mary found two of the trays lying on the table, and says she thought they wanted dusting, so she dusted them, and has knocked off most of the wings or antennæ.*" Lastly, Toby, beware of false philosophers who would make out that entomology is not worth caring for. It has been defended as a study by pointing to the benefits which the bee and the silk-worm have conferred on civilized man, and the "ravages of the turnip-fly," and so on. I don't think that it needs any such defence. The fact is, Toby, that the longer you live the more satisfactory you will find it is to have anything to do with natural history. If you once take it up in earnest, and learn to like it, you will never get tired of it, and it is inexhaustible. The folk who condemn it have minds of that class which languidly condemns life as slow, or dull, or uninteresting, unless

a whirl of excitement surrounds them—and what excitement! Reflection and contemplation are out of date now-a-days with the busy world, who have, day to day, business to absorb all their powers, but the lazzaroni among us have thrown them up, too, without substituting anything so sensible. Hence the false philosophy I spoke of, of which you will beware if you take the advice of,

Your affectionate Uncle.

CHRISTMAS HOLIDAYS AT EVERTON.

CHAPTER X.

“O think that all our fun will be over to-night!” sighed Maud. The play—the one absorbing subject of thought, speech, and action for so many days—was to be acted that night; on the morrow Fanny Arnott would return to London, and on the day after that Miss Burn would come back, and lessons would begin again.

“Well, there is no use in making ourselves unhappy about it,” replied Harry, philosophically; “we can’t eat our cake and have it; but we can at least enjoy it while we are eating it, and that’s what I intend to do. What do you think of my doublet?” And he marched up to Maud, and made her a low obeisance. “Don’t I look very mediæval and courtly?”

“Perhaps you might, if you had the rest of your dress as well; but at present you only look exceedingly absurd,” laughed Maud. “A blue satin doublet does not go well with pepper-and-salt trousers and a flannel shirt.”

“‘But I may hope in happier times, which heaven send soon——’”

“To possess a pair of trunk-hose and a velvet mantle? ‘But for the present the safety of our queen must occupy our every thoughts: even a wish that owns another object I account treason.’ Which reminds me that I must go and look for Aunt Fanny, and ask what is to be done about programmes.”

“Stop one moment,” pleaded Harry, “and give me your opinion of this sword. I despair of ever getting it to look bright enough. Will this do, d’you think, or must I put on another layer of gilding?”

"I should think that would do very well. After all, the chief thing is to know one's part. I wonder whether any of us will break down."

"It will be very hard if you do," said Mrs. Vernon, who had just come into the room, "for you seem to me to be rehearsing all day long. You never open your lips, except to say something melodramatic, and not at all *à propos*. There, how do you like that?" And she handed to Harry a dainty blue velvet cap, with a long white ostrich feather.

"Oh, how jolly! 'My liege, a thousand thanks,'" and Harry knelt on one knee, and kissed his mother's hand with courtly grace.

"Silly boy!" said Mrs. Vernon, "but I was forgetting that I was charged to tell you that your Cousin Frank is here, and that Aunt Fanny wants to have one last rehearsal this morning. They are waiting for you in the drawing-room." Upon which Harry and Maud dashed out of the room with an unceremonious haste that was not at all courtly.

The last rehearsal is always a very serious business. There must be no makeshifts, no reading of parts, no neglect of appropriate action. Everything must be complete and thorough, as if a large and critical audience were looking on. And it is very difficult either to act one's part well, or to go through all the tiresome details of scene-shifting, when one knows that one is only rehearsing. When it comes to the real performance it is quite a different thing. That has a reality and an importance of its own that ranks for the moment not far below the reality and importance of actual life, and one has beside candle-light and excitement to help one through. But to stand up in cold blood by daylight, with no expectant audience looking on, requires determination, and even courage, of no mean order. However, if people act plays they must go through the ordeal of dress rehearsals; and I am happy to say that the last rehearsal at Everton went off very well on the whole. The costumes fitted, the scenery worked well, and, though the actors were rather sparing of gesture, and went through very distressing scenes with a business-like coolness that was neither natural nor theatrical, as they made no mistakes in their parts, and never turned their backs on the place where the audience should be, Fanny Arnott expressed herself satisfied; and the others were only too happy to accept her assurances that warmth,

confidence, and spirit would come with the footlights—which footlights, I must confess, were a mere form of speech.

The programmes announced that the performance was to begin at eight o'clock, and before that time all the guests—invited at half-past seven, in order that there might be no delay in beginning—had arrived, partaken of tea and cake, and been set down in formal rows in front of the curtained stage, to study their programmes till the actors should be ready. That tantalizing curtain, how it swayed backwards and forwards in the draught from the door behind! how continually it seemed about to burst open and reveal the whole *corps dramatique*! and how invariably it righted itself just in time to keep its secret safely! A few enterprising boys ventured to leave their places, and peep through the cracks in the middle, and these spies brought back such amusing reports of what they had seen as tended, in conjunction with the disjointed remarks and exclamations that found their way through the curtain, to raise expectation to a height at which it was fast becoming unbearable.

“Where is my crown?”

“Here; tumbling about among the pots and pans.”

“And Shurk’s dagger?”

“Up in the tower-room, I’m afraid. No, here it is. Ah! mind what you are about. You had almost snapped the prison-bars in two.”

This kind of thing was still going on when the clock struck eight; but I must do the company the justice of saying that, at a very few minutes after eight, a tinkling bell announced that all was ready. There was a rustle among the audience, indicative of a general settling into places and attention, a last glance at programmes, and, finally, all eyes were fixed on the curtain, that was beginning slowly to rise, and disclose a room in King Siegfried’s palace, in which the queen and her maid of honour were seated, working industriously at a gorgeous piece of tapestry, which, between ourselves, had been finished off something like five hundred years ago, and was reputed to have hung in the tower-room ever since. But perhaps it wanted mending, and so the industry of Holda and Edith may have been genuine after all. Fanny Arnott, in her trailing blue velvet gown and tiara of jewels, looked truly royal. (I hope the reader will not betray my secret if I let out that those magnificently flashing rubies, emeralds, and sapphires, were bought neither at Mr. Ruby’s nor at

Mr. Emanuel Amethyst's, but were the result of one hour's work on the part of her majesty herself, who had manufactured them the day before out of gelatine paper, torn off of old crackers.) Edith was dressed in soft India muslin, with a bodice of some tinselly stuff, that looked like cloth of silver. They were seated on old-fashioned carved chairs, working diligently, as I have said before, at their tapestry. But it was evident that the thoughts of the queen were far away from her work, for, before the loud clapping, with which the rising of the curtain was greeted, had died away, her needle had fallen idly from her hand, and her eyes had wandered to the door, on which they remained fixed with an anxious, longing gaze. She spoke: it was to pour into the sympathising ear of Edith the tale of her fears regarding Siegfried, whose return from a victorious campaign had been hourly expected for a week past. The maid of honour, too, had her own reasons for being anxious, for, on the eve of the departure of the army, she had been, with the approval of the king and queen, betrothed to Edelherz, the king's young squire; and she knew well that whatever danger might befall the king would, in all human probability, involve the squire also. While they were earnestly discussing all possible and impossible hindrances that might have caused the delay—the floods and consequent bad roads, the long marches disabling men and horses—while now one and now the other became philosophical, and dwelt on the uselessness of forecasting evil, suddenly entered Edelherz, with the troubled look and travel-stained dress that denote the bearer of bad news. He told his tale; how Siegfried, having gained a signal victory over the enemy, was returning in triumph to the capital, when he was surprised on the frontier by an armed band of rebels; how the king's regiment, having been unwisely permitted to get in advance of the main army, was outnumbered and routed by the insurgents; how Shurk, the leader of the rebellion, had communicated with the remainder of the forces, and contrived, by false reports of the king's death and by smooth promises, to win them from their allegiance; and, finally, how the king was taken prisoner, and was now being led a captive to his own palace.

As I presume the story on which Fanny's play was founded is well known to "Aunt Judy's" readers, I do not intend to give a detailed account of it. I shall leave the reader to imagine the perfect dramatic propriety with which Holda fell fainting into Edith's arms, when she

realized the full horror of the situation; the loyal self-forgetfulness with which Edelherz and Edith, in this critical moment, thought only of the safety of their queen; and the confusion of the hurried flight, of the immediate necessity of which they were warned by loud shouts in the courtyard of "Long live Shurk!" which told how near the rebel army was. All these things the reader must picture for himself. (I ought perhaps to add *or herself*, but that is so ugly and clumsy; so, till some grammarian will invent for us a personal pronoun without distinctive gender, I shall say, as they do at the School Board, that all terms generally understood to denote boys include girls also, unless the inclusion of girls would make nonsense.)

The dungeon scene was very thrilling. Mr. Mildmay had made himself responsible for this part of the scenery, and it was generally admitted that he had achieved a great success. Two tall screens had been painted, so as to look like prison walls, and high up in one of them a narrow window had been cut, across which strips of black paper had been pasted, so as to represent iron bars. No lights were allowed upon the stage itself, but lamps were so arranged that through this grated window a shaft of light entered, and fell upon the captive king (Mr. Mildmay), who was sitting, in an attitude of extreme dejection, by a rough wooden table, on which stood an empty pitcher and a crust of bread. The queen, disguised as Edelherz, appeared at the grating, and lowered by a cord another pitcher. As it touched the floor of the dungeon it made a slight clang, which caused the king to rouse himself from his stupor so far as mechanically to rise from his seat, unfasten the pitcher from the cord, drink a draught of the "imperceptible water" it contained, and fasten the cord round the empty pitcher that had stood on the table; this was then drawn up, and next a supply of bread was let down in the same way. All this had passed in perfect silence, but now the queen, in a voice of extreme agitation, called her husband by his name. The recognition was touching, and the actors, without becoming sensational, managed to throw a good deal more of feeling into their parts than they had done at the rehearsal in the morning, when Jack had taxed Mr. Mildmay with taking his wife's sudden appearance with the coolness of a cucumber. Then followed a rapid interchange of questions and answers, Siegfried telling the story of his capture and imprisonment, and Holda unfolding the plan of escape, till the voice of Edelherz,

saying "Hark! hark! the dogs do bark," warned them that the interview could not be further prolonged without danger.

It would be difficult to say whether this scene or that of the actual escape—in which Edelherz, by suddenly putting out the light



and giving a false alarm of "something in the cupboard!" threw the royal household into a senseless panic, while the king glided unobserved (except by the spectators) across the stage—gave most satisfaction to

the audience, but I think the actors most enjoyed the latter, which they called the *scrimmaging scene*. The other was very thrilling to behold, but rather nervous work to get through. The passing of food and information through dungeon bars to royal captives is always attended by a good deal of anxiety, especially when one has to stand on the top of a pair of rather rickety housemaid's steps and let down a real earthenware pitcher between paper bars, which threaten every minute, by bending or tearing, to reveal to the audience their unsubstantial nature. But the paper bars did their duty, and when Siegfried, later in the play, painfully filed them through, they appeared to offer such determined resistance that one little girl among the audience was heard to exclaim, "Oh, poor man! he will never get out. Why did Mr. Mildmay make the bars so stout?" But he did get out, and all his faithful subjects were apprised of his escape, and they rallied round him and restored him to the throne, and everything came right in the end.

The only approach to a break-down during the whole play was in the last scene, when Shurk, scorning the proffered mercy of Siegfried, made a desperate attempt to assassinate him. The scene was in the hall of the palace. In the foreground, between two soldiers (boys from the audience, who had gladly enlisted in the royal army), stood Shurk, awaiting his sentence from the restored king, while at the back of the stage Edelherz and Edith were engaged in pleasant conversation that probably referred to living happily together ever after this momentous day.

When Siegfried said, "Shurk, you, too, shall be pardoned, if you will only confess that the papers which you showed were forged," Jack, who acted Shurk, sprang forward, brandished his dagger, and leaped with such sudden violence upon his cousin as caused him to tumble right over upon the stage in a manner that, in real life, must have for ever compromised his royal dignity. Instead of the yell of indignation with which historians relate that this treacherous act was greeted, there arose from actors and audience a shout of laughter, and it was some minutes before the fallen king could sufficiently recover himself to say with becoming gravity, "Stop, do not kill him, I am not hurt." And when, a few minutes afterwards, Edelherz knelt to receive knighthood at his sovereign's hand, a curious trembling movement was observed in his shoulders, which might certainly have

proceeded [from extreme emotion, or even from a not altogether unpardonable fear of the formidable sword from which he received the accolade, but which, in my opinion, indicated nothing more nor less than irrepressible laughter. But as neither the king, nor the queen, nor even the Lady Edith herself, appeared to resent this ill-timed hilarity, we need not be more censorious, and I hope the reader will join heartily with me in endorsing the royal wishes for the happiness of the faithful squire and his fair betrothed.

After the play came supper, and after supper dancing, Mrs. Vernon and Fanny taking it in turns to play till the party broke up.

"And so it is all over," said Harry, as the door slammed behind the last guest. "What on earth shall we do to-morrow? I expect we shall go on painting scenery and rehearsing our parts from sheer force of habit; don't you think you shall, Aunt Fanny?"

"I hope not, for I shall be in the train the greater part of to-morrow, and I think it not unlikely that if I were to begin rehearsing my part in a railway-carriage, and decorating the walls of the waiting-rooms, the guards might take upon themselves to put me out at Hanwell."

"Oh! I had forgotten for the moment that you were going; but you can't go. Telegraph to grandmamma, and stay another day, at least."

"Impossible, I am afraid," said Fanny; "and as I start early, and have still a good deal of packing to do, I must go to bed. Good-night;" and she took her candle and went upstairs. But she did not get to bed very early for all her good intentions.

Maud had been too much excited all day to give much thought to the melancholy fact that had occasioned her to sigh in the morning and declare that all their fun would be over to-night. There had been too much to do, and say, and think of in connection with the events of the day itself to leave any room for the events of the morrow; but when she found herself in the quiet of her own room, the thought that this was Aunt Fanny's last day, and that it was over, came forcibly before her mind, and would not be driven away. Fanny's visit had been very pleasant to every one at the Hall, from Mrs. Vernon down to Mabel, and now that she was going away they all asked themselves the question, "What shall we do without her?" But to Maud her companionship had been much more than

to any of the others; it seemed quite the thing she had before been dimly conscious of wanting. Near enough to her own age to be able to understand and enter into her feelings and thoughts and tastes, and yet old enough to have had a much wider experience of life, Fanny had done Maud the great service of enlarging her world. There are many very good and kind grown people who make it a rule never to talk to boys and girls of anything they do not already know and understand for fear of boring them with instruction out of school-hours, but this was not Fanny's way at all. Whatever she saw, read, or thought, she was ready to talk about to any human being, whether man, woman, or child, that came in her way. You could hardly start any topic of conversation that did not remind her of a picture she had seen, a book she had read, or a place she had been at; and if you showed the slightest interest in the subject, she was delighted to talk it over with you. Now to Maud, for whom life had, till now, meant nothing more than the trivial round of everyday occupations—lessons, walks, needlework, and story-books—such talk seemed to open a whole new world, and a world so large and full of interest that the old one, in which she had lived contentedly till now, appeared, when contrasted with it, quite intolerable in its narrowness and pettiness.

She undressed and got into bed, but, what with the excitement of the play and the anticipation of to-morrow's calamity, she could not sleep. She turned from one side to the other, tried various dodges for inducing sleep, such as counting to a thousand, thinking of sheep passing through gates, repeating poetry, but all in vain. At last she resolved on a bold course; she would get up, steal along the passage to Aunt Fanny's door, and, if there was light to be seen under it, go in and have a chat. She huddled on her dressing-gown and went. The light was there; she knocked and was admitted. Fanny had just finished her packing and was reading over the fire.

"May I come and have a talk, Aunt Fanny?"

"What, at this time of night! How can I possibly countenance such an irregular proceeding?"

"Never mind its irregularity. It's your last night, and I can't sleep: so if I went back to bed I should only lie awake, which would be another irregular proceeding."

Fanny was easily persuaded, so they sat down together, and Maud began the conversation by exclaiming—

"How shall we ever get on without you!"

"Well, I suppose you will get on much as you did before I came. That was hardly three weeks ago, and you seemed to have got on pretty well up to that time."

"Oh, but——"

"But you are tired, and after a week of excitement you suddenly feel a reaction, which you will get over as suddenly."

"No, I shall not. It is more than that."

"What is it then?"

"It is this. You have told me about so many things that I never even heard of before, you have made me think quite differently about life, and wish for quite different things to what I did before you came, and now you are going away, and I must fall back into the old dull ways and I don't know how I can ever do it."

Fanny Arnott was distressed. Her influence had been exerted so unconsciously that she had not at all realized its extent.

"My dear child," she said, "if you talk like this you will make me quite unhappy, for I shall feel that I have made you discontented with your every-day life."

"My every-day life is so little," said Maud, sadly.

"And you have been reading the 'Spanish Gypsy,' and you think you would like to play a great part like Fedalma's?"

Maud hesitated. "I do feel something of that kind. People are always saying that trifles are very important, and I daresay they may be, but I am tired of them, and I should like to have to do with great things, if it was only for a change." She tried to laugh, but the sound that came was more like a sob.

"Are you quite sure," asked Fanny, seriously, "that you would be fit for the great things?"

"I don't know." Maud looked steadily at the fire for some seconds, then suddenly looked up and said, almost defiantly, "Don't think me very conceited, but I think I could do great things if I had the chance."

"I don't think you conceited at all," answered Fanny. "The feeling you own to is a very common one, and I do not see, myself, any reason why it should not more often be a true one than not. Great opportunities do, in a wonderful manner, make great men and women; that is, they bring out the greatness that is in people; and I sympathize with you in your impatience of trifles."

"I am so glad."

"I think it is very bad indeed for people to live always in an atmosphere of trifles, and, what is more, I think that those who do so are very much to blame."

"But how are we to help ourselves?" asked Maud, impatiently. "Somebody says that 'trifles make the sum of human things,' and I'm sure my life is all trifles. Don't you think it is?"

"I quite think that in one sense most lives are made up of trifles, and I think it very probable that you, for instance, may never be called upon to do any one action that could be fairly called great. But then life is not only *doing*. There are thinking and feeling, which ought to count for something, and though it may not be our own fault if we pass our lives in little actions, and among small events, I am quite certain that it is our own fault if we have none but small thoughts and feelings."

"But it is only people with great minds who can be expected to have great thoughts."

"Who can be expected to find *new* thoughts, perhaps. But happily great minds and great hearts are very generous, and they let us share their great thoughts and feelings. We can read the lives and the books of great people till we come to know them better than we know half the little people we talk with every day."

"Yes; but if what we read only makes us more discontented with our own lot, if it only makes the trifles seem more trifling, what then?"

"Why, if it *only* does this, it will be very unfortunate. But I very much doubt whether reading wise books, and accustoming one's mind to great thoughts, ever could have *only* this effect. It will certainly make the trifles seem more trifling than they did before, and it is well it should, for it is very necessary to learn what things are great and what little; and the best way of seeing the littleness of the little things is to place them side by side with the great ones."

"And then they look so little that one is disgusted with them, and one turns away from them."

"Does one?—and what does one turn to?"

"Oh, I don't know—to anything or nothing; but one would like to turn to great things, only great things never happen to be at hand."

"Then you think the next best thing to a great thing is *nothing*. I

should have thought the little thing, well done, was better than that, and also nearer to the great thing."

Maud was disappointed; she had fancied her aunt was going to sweep trifles away, without reserve, as things beneath one's notice, and now she seemed to be setting them up again as things of importance. She protested, upon which Fanny said—

"You seem to have misunderstood me. I quite recognise that, trifles have a certain importance, and I only wish you to remember that they are trifles, in order that when they happen to come into collision with things that are not trifles you should understand which are to be set aside."

"But what is the use of encouraging such great thoughts and feelings, if they are never to lead to great actions?"

"I think I only said that they *might* never lead to great actions. It is quite possible that you may some day be called upon to do great things, and in that case your fitness for the work will probably depend very much on whether your mind has been fed in the meantime on great thoughts. And, looking at things in this way, it seems to me that we have all of us, at least, one great duty—that of fitting ourselves for great actions, should they ever be demanded of us."

Maud was silent for a few minutes; then she said, "That is a great duty. I like it." But she added, in another moment, "After all, though, it is a thousand chances to one that one ever is called upon to do great actions. And if one is not, all this training is thrown away—wasted."

"I do not think there is any fear of its being wasted," said Fanny. "If we live as far as we can in a world of high thought and noble feeling, our lives must be the better for it; our actions may not be great, but they will be right; we shall not despise little duties, but we shall be above all petty feelings and petty actions, which would be condemned by the standard we have accustomed ourselves to, and our influence on others will be for good. And in this way our nobler thoughts and feelings may very likely pass into great actions, if not of our own, of those whom we have influenced. I often wonder, when I hear so much importance attached to the power possessed by rich people of giving money and food to the poor, that so little should be thought of the power we all possess, in some degree, of helping those around us to find good food for their minds and hearts. There 'is so

much of it in the world, and yet so many people are starving around us merely for want of some one to unlock the storehouses for them."

"You have opened one storehouse to me in the 'Spanish Gypsy,' I think."

"I hoped I had, till you told me that reading it had only made you discontented."

"But I will not let it do that any more. I shall remember about my great duty, and that will make up for the little ones. I like the thought, too, that one may help other people to be great. It is like what Longfellow says about leaving footprints on the track of time :

"Footprints that perhaps another,
Sailing o'er life's solemn main,
A forlorn and shipwrecked brother,
Seeing shall take heart again."

"Or, as I read the other day," said Fanny—

"We run
With girdled loins our lamplit race,
And each from each takes heart of grace
And spirit, till his turn be done,
And light of face from each man's face,
In whom the light of trust is one;
Since only souls that keep their place,
By their own light, and watch things roll,
And stand, have light for any soul."

"How fine!" said Maud; "I wonder whether I shall ever 'have light for any soul.'"

"I hope you may; but now I must positively send you to bed. What will your mother say to me for allowing you to sit up in this way?"

"I will go directly, but first you must promise to write to me when you get home—long letters about books, and pictures, and things that are going on in the large world."

"Indeed I will. I am very fond of writing letters, and I shall expect you to write to me and tell me how you are getting on in your large world; for, mind, I do not mean to allow you to live in a little one. And you must come up to London in the summer and stay with me, and we will go together to see all manner of things, and have no end of wise talks."

"That would be nice."

"I have got your mother's consent already, so you can console yourself in parting with me to-morrow with looking forward to meeting again before very long. Now, to bed."

And Maud went to bed and soon fell asleep—and dreamt of Fedalma, and Silva, and the National Gallery (as her aunt had described it to her), and Fanny Arnott, and Edelherz, and a score of other incongruous things—and woke up in the morning with a heavy heart to face the fact that Aunt Fanny was going to-day.

We will not dwell on the details of Fanny's departure, which, in spite of wild hopes on the part of Jack that a telegram would stop her at the last moment, or that she would miss her train, took place at the time appointed. Everybody was very disconsolate when she was gone, and continued so for two or three days. But at the end of that time the question, "What is one to do without Aunt Fanny?" gave place to another, which was, "What can have become of Cousin Frank?"

For Harry and Jack, on the third day after their aunt left them, walked over to the Rectory, and came back with the startling intelligence that Mr. Mildmay had gone to London, starting off quite suddenly, without giving any explanation of his departure, and only leaving word with the housekeeper that he should be back by Sunday. What could it mean? Cousin Frank did not often go to London, and when he did, he never failed to let them know at the Hall of his intention. The move was entirely unprecedented, and the children were thrown into a great state of wonderment. Mrs. Mildmay, however, took the matter more quietly, and, indeed, smiled so knowingly, when first she heard the news, that the children suspected her of being in the secret.

The next day's post cleared up the mystery. A letter from Aunt Fanny to Mrs. Vernon contained the following information. Two days after her return to town, Fanny had been told that Mr. Mildmay was in the drawing-room, and wished to see her. He had come to tell her that he, as well as the people at the Hall, could not possibly get on without her, and to persuade her, if possible, to come back before long and settle herself at the Rectory as Mrs. Mildmay. Fanny had thought the idea a good one, and had agreed to come.

This was news indeed. Aunt Fanny coming to live close to them always! The boys seemed to expect her to arrive in a day or

two, but Maud knew better; people do not marry in such a hurry. They buy trousseaux, and have bridesmaids, and all these things take time; and indeed Maud hoped that there would be time for her own visit to London to take place before the wedding.

Suddenly a serious difficulty presented itself to the mind of Mabel. "If Aunt Fanny marries Cousin Frank she won't be Aunt Fanny any longer. We shall have to call her *Cousin Fanny*. How tiresome!"

As the Vernons once before had grave doubts as to what they should call Fanny Arnott, and as the doubts were got over without much difficulty, we may hope that Mabel's new puzzle will be not less easily solved.

TO A BIRD IN CHURCH



HAT brought thee there, sweet bird, with fluttering wing,
That travelled up and down that strange abode?
Who was it guided thee, thou fragile thing,
To seek a dwelling in the House of God?

There up and down thou fled'st, and round and round,
Settling awhile on some carved point or niche,
Lulled into awe by every solemn sound,
Soothed by the voices lowered to reverent pitch.

Oh stranger bird! if thou a spirit had,
Discerning betwixt worship right and wrong,
Would the lip-service there have made thee glad?
Couldst thou rejoice at that weak prayer and song?

Ah no! the heart of man but half escapes
The walls that chained the fluttering nestling in;
His spirit no more noble worship shapes
Than that of feigned lips, defiled by sin.

Could we but realize the Heavenly Dove
For ever present 'mid a praying throng,
Would not our hearts rebound with warmer love?
Less cold become our prayer, more glad our song?

Then let thy visit a sweet emblem be
Of the Eternal Presence ever there,
That we may be no more content than thee
To seek a limit to our praise and prayer.

E. M. L.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.

"Mary K." "The Forns of Great Britain," by John E. Sowerby (Bell and Daldy, York Street, Covent Garden). is an excellent work, and will give all the information you require.

"A Constant Reader." The following account of the Sancy diamond is taken from a book on "Gems," by Augusto Castellani: "James II. of the Stuarts, when in exile at St. Germain, sold it for 625,000 *tornesi* to Louis XIV. Thus the Sancy entered the French treasury.

* * * When, in 1792, the royal treasury was robbed, it disappeared. In 1835 it was found again in the hands of a partisan of the Bourbons, who sold it to the Master of the Hunt of the Emperor Nicholas for 500,000 roubles. Now it belongs to the family Demidoff of Petersburg."

"Peggie." The words of the song you ask for are scarcely worth reprinting in our Magazine. You can easily obtain them by applying to a music-seller.

"Deane." Your quotation is too indefinite for Aunt Judy to know where to find it; a similar line might be found in almost any book of poetry.

"Marina" sends the following reply to "N. C.'s" inquiry in July: "The Japanese generally sit, kneeling, doubling their legs under them, and sitting on their heels; it is in this way exactly that the ladies sit while at their tea."

"Gwendolina and Marina." Aunt Judy cannot occupy the space in her Correspondence by replying to questions which it is obvious that her young friends might easily answer for themselves.

"Alice." Aunt Judy was much pleased with your genial letter, and will answer your eight questions as far as she can.

(1.) There seems little doubt that Sir William Wallace was hung at Smithfield, and his body afterwards cut up and sent to different parts of the kingdom. Miss Porter must have been exercising a romantic licence when she gave so merciful an account of his demise.

(2.) King Robert Bruce died of a complaint which went by the name of leprosy. Perhaps some of our readers can tell you the name of his wife? and describe his crest?

(3.) Prince Rupert was not married. He had six brothers and four sisters, as follows: 1. Henry Frederick (drowned at Amsterdam). 2. Charles Louis. 3. Maurice. 4. Edward. 5. Philip. 6. Gustavus (died when a child). 1. Elizabeth (a Lutheran nun). 2. Henrietta Maria. 3. Louisa (a Catholic nun). 4. Sophia.

(4.) The name *Alice* was originally identical with *Adelaide*, both being derived from the German *Adelheid*, i.e., nobility. It became *Adeliza* in Southern Europe, and thence *Alice* in England.

(5.) There is but one edition of the book you ask for. Miss Yonge only wrote the *Preface* to "Lady Beatrix Graham."

(6.) If you think so, why not try to improve it?

(7.) This is a matter of comparison.

(8.) Sir Thomas Malory's "Morte d'Arthur" (first printed by Caxton) perhaps contains the fullest account of King Arthur and the Knights of the Round Table. There are also numerous early English texts and MSS. which give various legends connected with them. Several of these have been published by the early English Text Society, but you will hardly find them available, and be more interested by such books as

"Legends of King Arthur and his Knights," by J. T. K. (Strahan & Co.), or Mrs. Hervey's "Feasts of Camelot" (Bell & Daldy).

"May-flower." Most traditional characters have some foundation in truth, and Aunt Judy is willing to give the blameless king the benefit of the doubt. It is a sad view of poor humanity to think that he was "too good to be true."

"A. Z." recommends "Lilian's Happy Hours; or, Talks about the Sun, Moon, and Stars" (Published by the Religious Tract Society), to "Twelve Years Old."

"A. G." The names of the British heaths are as follows: (1.) Common heath, or ling. (2.) Scotch heather. (3.) Crop-leaved heath. (4.) Ciliated heath. (5.) Cornish heath. The two last are comparatively rare.

"Silverwing." You will find "Day-break" in any complete edition of Longfellow's poems.

"H. C. P." returns thanks for the pattern of a baby's boot kindly lent.

"Aunt True." Any questions you wish to ask must be sent to the Editor: there is no other rule. Clothes or toys for the Cot patient, to the Secretary of the Children's Hospital, 49, Great Ormond Street, London; who will also supply you with a photograph on the receipt of sixpence, and a stamped and addressed envelope.

"Katie" asks where she can find the following quotations:

"There's a sweetness, there's a sadness
In the thought of days gone by."

"She was,
With gentle words and smiling face,
A sunbeam in that lowly place."

"Rowena" asks if any one will kindly lend her a stamp snake as a pattern? She will pay for the postage, and return it carefully. Address—Miss K. Johnson, Dudley Villas, 242, Clapham Road, Clapham, London.

"Mortimer Lightwood." You will find the names of the children of Elizabeth and Frederick V. of Bohemia in our answer to "Alice" above. Henrietta married, but had no children. Can any of our readers say what heirs Charles, Edward, Maurice, and Philip left?

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, July 15th, 1872.

The subscribers to "Aunt Judy's Cot" will be pleased to know that Jane D—— is going on well, the tiny foot continues to improve, and the kind surgeon who has her under his charge expresses himself hopeful of the result.

Aunt Judy's readers will perhaps expect to hear something about the visit of their Royal Highnesses the Prince and Princess of Wales on Thursday, the 11th July. It need scarcely be said that the early days of the month were full of anticipation and excitement to all the little patients in the wards of the Hospital: indeed it is difficult to say whether the excitement in anticipation, or the pleasure of thinking and talking of the auspicious day and its events, now that it is past, has given the greater enjoyment.

As the first stone of the Hospital was to be laid on that afternoon, it was necessary to do honour to the great occasion, in making the old building as gay as possible, and to express by its festive attire all the love and loyalty of those who decked it. Could Aunt Judy's readers have witnessed the bustle and excitement of preparation on Thursday, July 11th, they would have been amused: all the little patients watched with eager interest the arrangement of flowers, and the various simple decorations which brightened the wards. A lady present, however, made a remark in which, doubtless, all Aunt Judy's readers will concur, that, "After all, the

most beautiful decoration of the wards was the joyous faces and bright eyes of the *little patients themselves*."

The hope that the Princess would pay a visit to the wards after the ceremony of laying the first stone in the grounds of the Hospital, led all the children to think that they must keep their little cots very tidy, and that the white sheets must not look rumpled on the occasion. A jocular remark by one of the nurses, that if a certain little maiden could not possibly "keep her bed tidy she had better be tied down," was received quite seriously by some of the children, and it was amusing to hear the interpretation of the remark by a tiny three-year old, who confidently informed her companion in the next cot, "*When the Princess comes we are all to be tied into our beds!*" And so great was the desire to receive Her Royal Highness properly, that it was thought that the children would readily have acquiesced in any arrangement to meet the occasion.

Aunt Judy's readers will not need to be told about the ceremony; no doubt they will have read, or heard, all about how the bright sun shone down on the gay colours, and the bright faces of the thousand friends outside—how, under flags flying, four hundred children of various schools surrounded the Royal Pavilion, and, accompanied by the band of the Coldstream Guards, they joined in singing the simple hymn—

"O praise our God to-day,
His constant mercy bless,
Whose love hath helped us on our way
And granted us success."

The Prince and Princess both uniting their voices. How that their Royal Highnesses, who have known what sickness and suffering is, came to bid Good Speed to the Hospital, where both shall be alleviated, if not removed—how earnest prayers were offered that God would bless the work—and how the great stone was guided into its place by fair and

royal hands, amidst the shouts and cheers of hundreds of hearty well-wishers. But the young readers do not know, and can scarcely guess, how fair a sight was seen after the ceremony, when, up among the tiny cots of the poor little sick children (many of whom came from the poorest and lowest depths of London haunts), the royal visitors moved gently and graciously, smiling kindly on all, and taking especial interest in those who suffered most.

Little ones were there, who a month ago scarcely knew the meaning of the words "Prince" and "Princess," but will now remember all their lives, and teach others also, to connect such royal names with all that is worthy of loyalty, honour, and love. The "Aunt Judy's Cot" patient, Janie, received special notice, and was honoured by kind words from both the Prince and Princess.

In the next report it is hoped that some account will be given of the patient who will by that time be in the *Second "Aunt Judy's Cot,"* which is to be placed in the Boys' ward; the amount received on that account being now sufficient to justify its establishment.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to July 15th, 1872.

£ s. d.

Louisa Spicer, Spy Park			
(annual)	0	10	0
Helen, Halesworth (quarterly)	0	16	6
Orla (monthly)	0	0	6
F. and E. (annual)	0	2	6
G. A. F. (for May, June, and July) (monthly)	0	11	8
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie (monthly)	0	1	3
A. G. (two months) (monthly)	0	0	6
Susan and Harriet (for June and July) (monthly)	0	4	0
Padre, Madre, Peggie, Bebelles, and Bee, Sunbury-on-Thames (for June and July) (monthly)	0	16	0

	£	s.	d.
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
M. A. F. (three months)	0	1	6
Francis Haydn Green (monthly) .	0	1	0
Collected by Granny's Ladies (quarterly): Father, 6d., Mother, 6d., Nurses, 6d., Cecca, 6d., G. A., 4d., H. W., 6d., Uncle, 6d., with a little book for Toby	0	3	4
"In Memoriam," Florence Helen Trower	31	10	0
Miss Grant, Chelsea	0	0	6
Edwin, 1s. 8d., Ethel, 2s. 10½d., Hubert, 1s. (collected in boxes)	0	5	6½
Mabel and Lily	0	2	6
Mary, Margaret, Evelyn, Ar- thur, and Carnegie	1	0	0
Ernest, Bertie, Pollie, Arnold, Julia, and Livingstone, Hazel House	0	3	0
Charlotte and Kathleen	0	2	0
Miss Eva Horn, 9, Westbourne Terrace, Addiscombe	0	7	2
Bessie, Eton College	0	2	6
Contents of Ethel M. Mackin- der's box	0	8	0
Florence, Edith, and Minnie			

	£	s.	d.
Jane Church, Proceeds of Summer House Bazaar, Chelmsford	5	15	0
"Our own Eleven," entered in error last month 6s. 9d., should have been 10s.	0	3	3
"Thanks"	0	3	0
Jenny and Mary, Esher Lodge .	0	5	0
Two little Birds	0	15	6
Lilian Martha	0	1	6
Dash and Tiny, Scarcroft . . .	0	2	6
Eight little lovers of Aunt Judy, Kidderminster	0	10	0
Katie, Marion, and Edith . . .	0	3	0
K. H. Moreton (collected) . .	0	5	3
The Highdown Sisters	0	8	6
Janet Thompson, Upper Clap- ton	0	8	0
Mamma, Maud, Lily, Clara, Stephen, Edward	0	7	0
Sarah, Rochdale, a picture-book for "Toby."			
Emily, a scrap-book.			
A pretty name alphabet, drawn, painted, and written by May Barrowe, for "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot."			
May, 3 Picture Books.			



ASTOR, LENOX
TILDEN FOUNDATIONS



SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XXIV.

GOING TO MEET THE BOYS.—JACK'S HAT-BOX.—WE COME HOME A
RATTLER.—WE LINK.



LEANOR and I were as much absorbed by the prospect of the boys' arrival as we had been by the coming of her parents.

We made a "ruin" at the top of the little gardens, which did not quite fulfil our ideal when all was done; but we hoped that it would look better when the ivy was more luxuriant. We made all the beds look very tidy. The fourth bed was given to me.

"Now you *are* our sister!" Eleanor cried. "It seems to make it so real now you have got *her* bed."

We thoroughly put in order the old nursery, which was now "the boys' room," a proceeding in which Growler and Pincher took great interest, jumping on and off the beds, and smelling everything as we set it out. Growler was Clement's dog, I found, and Pincher belonged to Jack.

"They'll come in a cab, because of the luggage," said Eleanor, "and because we are never quite sure when they will come. They often miss trains, on purpose to stay somewhere on the road for a lark. But I think they'll come all right this time. I begged them to; and we'll go and meet them in the donkey-carriage."

The donkey-carriage was a pretty little thing on four wheels, with a seat in front and a seat behind, each equal to holding one small person. Eleanor had almost outgrown the front seat; but she managed to squeeze into it, and I climbed in behind. We had dressed Neddy's head and our own hats liberally with roses, so that our festive appearance drew the notice of the villagers, more than one of whom, from their cottage-doors, asked if we were going to meet "the young gentlemen," and added, "They'll be rare and glad to get home, I reckon!"

Impatience had made us early, and we drove some little distance before espying the cab, which toiled up-hill at much the same pace as

the black snails crawled by the roadside. Eleanor drew up by the ditch, and we stood up and waved our handkerchiefs. In a moment two handkerchiefs were waving from the cab-windows. We shouted, and faint hoorays came back upon the breeze. Neddy pricked his ears, the dogs barked, and only the cabman remained unmoved, though we could see sticks and umbrellas poked at him from within, in the vain effort to induce him to hasten on.

At last we met. The boys tumbled out, one on each side, and a good deal of fragmentary luggage tumbled out after them. Clement seemed to be rather older than Eleanor, and Jack, I thought, a little younger than me.

"How d'ye do, Margery?" said Jack, shaking me warmly by the hand. "I'm awfully glad to hear the news about you; we shall be all square now, two and two, like a quadrille."

"How do you do, Miss Vandeleur?" said Clement.

"Look here, Eleanor," Jack broke in again; "I'll drive Margery home in the donkey-carriage, and you can go with Clem in the cab. I wish you'd give me the wreath off your hat, too."

Eleanor willingly agreed, the wreath was adjusted on Jack's hat, and we were just taking our places, when he caught sight of the luggage that had fallen out on Clement's side of the cab—some fishing-rods, a squirrel in a fish-basket, and a hat-box.

"Oh!" he screamed, "there's my hat-box! Take the reins, Margery!" and he flew over the wheel, and returned, hat-box in hand.

"Is it a new hat?" I asked, sympathisingly.

"A hat!" he scornfully exclaimed. "My hat's loose in the cab somewhere, if it came at all; but all my beetles are in here, pinned to the sides. Would you mind taking it on your knee, to be safe?"

And having placed it there, he scrambled once more into the front seat, and we were about to start (the cab was waiting for us, the cabman looking on with a grim smile at Jack, whilst energetic Eleanor rearranged the luggage inside), when there came a second check.

"Have you got a pin?" Jack asked me.

"I'll see," said I; "what for?"

"To touch up Neddy with. We're going home a rattler."

But on my earnestly remonstrating against the pin, Jack contented himself with pointing a stick, which he assured me would "hurt much more."

"Now, cabby!" he cried, "keep your crawler back till we're well away. You'd better let us go first, or we might pass you on the road, and hurt the feelings of that spirited beast of yours. Do you like going fast, Margery?"

"As fast as you like," said I.

I knew nothing whatever of horses and donkeys, or of what their poor legs could bear; but I liked very much passing swiftly through the air. I do not think Neddy suffered, however, though we went back at a pace marvellously differing from that at which we came. We were very light weights, and Master Neddy was an overfed, under-worked gentleman, with the acutest discrimination as to his drivers. Jack's voice was quite enough, the pointed stick was superfluous. When we came to the top of the steep hill leading down to the village, Jack asked me, "Shall we go down a rattler?"

"Oh do!" said I.

"Hold on to the hat-box, then, and don't tumble out."

Down we went. The carriage swayed from side to side; I sat with my arms tightly clasped round the hat-box, and felt as if I were flying straight down on to the church tower. I noticed that Jack did not speak till we reached the bottom. Then he said, "Well, that's a blessing! I never thought we should get safe to the bottom."

"Then why did you drive so fast?" I inquired.

"My dear Margery, there's no drag on this carriage; and when I'd once given Neddy his head he couldn't stop himself, no more could I. But he's a plucky, sure-footed little beast; and I shall walk up this hill out of respect for him."

I resolved to do the same, and clambered out, leaving the hat-box on the seat. I went up to Jack, who was patting Neddy's neck, on which he stuck out his right arm, and said, "Link!"

"What?" said I.

"Link," said Jack; and as he stuck out his elbow again in an unmistakeable fashion, I took his arm.

"We call that linking, in these parts," said Jack. "Good-evening, Mrs. Loxley. Good-evening, Peter. Thank you, thank you. I'm precious glad to get home, too. I should think not!" These sentences were replies to the warm greetings Jack received from the cottagedoors; the last to the remark, "You don't find a many places to beat t'ould one, sir, I expect!"

"I'm very popular in the village," said my eccentric companion, with a sigh, as we turned into the drive. "Though I say it that shouldn't, you think? Well! *Ita vita*. Such is life's half circle. Do you know Ledbitter?"

"I know you all talk in riddles," said I.

"Well, never mind; you'll know Ledbitter, and all the old books in the house by-and-by. Plenty of 'em, aren't there? The governor had a curate once, when his throat was bad. *He* said it was an Entertaining Library of Useless Knowledge. I've brought home one more volume to add to it. Second prize for chemistry. Only three fellows went in for it; which you needn't allude to at head-quarters," and he sighed again.

As we passed slowly under the shadow of the heavy foliage Jack, like Eleanor, put up his left arm to drag down a bunch of roses. They were farther advanced now, and the shower of rose-leaves fell thickly like snow-flakes over us—over Jack and me, and Neddy and the carriage, with the hat-box on the driving-seat. We must have looked very quaint, I think, as we came up out of the overshadowed road, like dwarfs out of a fairy tale, covered with flowers, and leading our carriage with its odd occupant inside.

Keziah, who had been counting the days to the holidays, ran down first to meet us, beaming with pleasure; though when Jack, in a futile attempt to play leap-frog with her against her will, damaged her cap, and clung to her neck till I thought she would have been throttled, she indignantly declared that, "Now the young gentlemen was home there was an end of peace for everybody, choose who they might be."

CHAPTER XXV.

I CORRESPOND WITH THE MAJOR.—MY COLLECTIONS.—OCCUPATIONS.—
MADAME AGAIN.—FÊTE DE VILLAGE.—THE BRITISH HOORAY.

I WROTE to my old friends and relatives, with a full account of my new home. Rather a comically-expressed account too, I fancy, from the bits Uncle Buller used to quote in after years. I got charming letters from him, piquant with his dry humour, and full of affection. Maria generally added a note also; and Aunt Theresa always sent love and kisses in abundance, to atone for being too busy to write by that post.

The fonder I grew of the Arkwrights the better I seemed to love and understand Uncle Buller. Apart as we were, we had now a dozen interests in common—threads of those intellectual ties over which the changes and chances of this mortal life have so little power.

My sympathy was real, as well as ready, when the Major discovered a new insect, almost invisible by the naked eye, which thenceforward bore the terrible specific name of *Bulleriana*, suggesting a creature certainly not less than a rhinoceros, and surrounding the Major's name with something of the halo of immortality. He was equally glad to hear of Jack's beetles and of my freshwater shells. I had taken to the latter as being "the only things not yet collected by somebody or other in the house;" and I became so infatuated in the pursuit that I used to get up at four o'clock in the morning to search the damp places and water-herbage by the river, it being emphatically "the early bird who catches" snails. After his great discovery, the Major constantly asked if I had found a specimen of *Helix Vandaleuriana* yet. It was a joke between us—that new shell that I was to discover!

I have an old letter open by me now, in which, writing of the Arkwrights, he says, "Your dear father's daughter could have no better home." And, as I read, my father's last hours come back before me, and I hear the poor faint voice whispering, "You've got the papers, Buller? Arkwright will be kind about it, I'm sure." And "It's all dark, now." And with tears I wonder if he—with whom it is all light now—knows how well his true friends have dealt by me, and how happy I am.

To be busy is certainly half-way to being happy. And yet it is not so with every kind of labour. Some occupations, however, do seem of themselves to be peace-bringing; I mean, to be so independent of the great good of being occupied at all. Gardening, sketching, and natural history pursuits, for instance. Is it partly because one follows them in the open air, in great measure?—fresh air, that mysteriously mighty power for good! Anodyne, as well as tonic; dispeller of fever when other remedies are powerless; and the best accredited recipe for long life. Only partly, I think. One secret of the happiness of some occupations is, perhaps, that they lift one away from petty cares and petty spites, without trying the brain or strength unduly, as some kinds of mental labour must do. And how delightful is fellowship in such

interests! What rivalries without bitterness; what gossip without scandal; what gifts and exchanges; what common interests and mutual sympathy!

In such happy business the holidays went by. Then the question arose, Were we to go back to school? Very earnestly we hoped not; and I think the Arkwrights soon resolved not to send Eleanor away again. As to me, the case was different. Mr. Arkwright felt that he must do what was best for my education; and he wrote to consult with Major Buller. Fortunately for Eleanor and me, the Major was now as much prejudiced against girls' schools as he had been against governesses; and as masters were to be had at the nearest town, a home education was decided upon. It met with the approval of such of my relatives as were consulted—my great-grandmother especially—and it certainly met with mine.

Eleanor and I were very anxious to show that idleness was not our object in avoiding Bush House. The one of my diaries that escaped burning has, on the fly-leaf, one of the many "lesson plans" we made for ourselves.

We used to get up at six o'clock, and work before breakfast. Certain morning headaches, to which at this time I became subject, led to a serious difference of opinion between me and Mrs. Arkwright; she forbidding me to get up, and I holding myself to be much aggrieved, and imputing the headaches to anything rather than what Keziah briefly termed "book-larning upon an empty stomach." The matter was compromised, thanks to Keziah, by that good creature's offering to bring me new milk and bread and butter every morning before I began to work. She really brought it before I dressed, and my headaches vanished.

Though we did not wish to go back to Bush House, we were not quite unmindful of our friends. Eleanor wrote to thank Madame for the flowers, and received a long and enthusiastic letter in reply—in French, of course, and pointing out one or two blunders in Eleanor's letter, which was in French also. She begged Eleanor to continue to correspond with her, for the improvement of her "composition." Poor Madame! She was indeed an indefatigable teacher, and had a real ambition for the success of her pupils, which, in the drudgery of her life, was almost grand.

Strange to say, she once came to the Vicarage. It was during the

succeeding summer to that in which I came to live with the Arkwrights. She had been in the habit of spending the holidays with a family in the country, where, I believe, she gave some instruction in French and music, in return for her expenses. That summer she was out of health, and thinking herself unable to fulfil her part of the bargain, she would not go. After severe struggles with her sensitive scruples, she was persuaded to come to us instead, on the distinct condition that she was to do nothing in the way of "lessons" but talk French with us. To persuade her to accept any payment for her services was the subject of another long struggle. The thriftiest of women in her personal expenditure, and needing money sorely, Madame was not grasping. Indeed her scruples on this subject were troublesome. She was for ever pursuing us, book in hand, and with a sun-veil and umbrella to shield her complexion, into the garden or the hay-field, imploring us to come in out of the wind and sun, and do "a little of dictation—of composition," or even to permit her to hear us play that duet from the "Semiramide," of which the time had seemed to her on the last occasion far from perfect.

Her despair when Mrs. Arkwright supported our refusal was comical, and she was only pacified at last by having the "scrap-bag" of odds and ends of net, muslin, lace and embroidery, handed over to her, from which she made us set after set of dainty collars and sleeves in various "modes," sitting well under the shade of the trees, on a camp-stool, with a camphor bag to keep away insects, and in bodily fear of the dogs.

Poor Madame! I thought she would have had a fit on the first night of her arrival, when the customary civility was paid of offering her a dog to sleep on her bed. She never got really accustomed to them, and they never seemed quite to understand her. To the end of her stay they snuffed at her black skirts suspiciously, as if she were still more or less of an enigma to them. Madame was markedly civil to them, and even addressed them from time to time as "Bons enfants," in imitation of our phrase "dear boys;" but more frequently, in watching the terms on which they lived with the family, she would throw up her little brown hands and exclaim, "*Ménage extraordinaire!*"

I am sure she thought us a strange household in more ways than one, but I think she grew fond of us. For Eleanor, she had always had a liking; about Eleanor's mother she became rhapsodical.

"How good!" so she cried to me, "and how truthful! how altogether truthful! What talents also, my faith! Miss Arkwright has had great advantages. A mother extraordinary!"

Mrs. Arkwright had many discussions with Madame on political subjects, and also on the education of girls. On the latter their views were so essentially different, that the discussion was apt to wax hot. Madame came at last to allow that for English girls Madame Arkwright's views might be just, but *pour les filles françaises*—she held to her own opinions.

With the boys she got on very well. At first they laughed at her; then Clement became polite, and even learned to speak French with her after a fashion. Jack was not only ignorant of French, but his English was so mixed with schoolboy idioms, that Madame and he seldom got through a conversation without wonderful complications, from which, however, Jack's expressive countenance and ready wit generally delivered them in the long run. I do not know whether, on the whole, Madame did not like Mr. Arkwright best of all. *Le bon pasteur*, as she called him.

"The Furrin Lady," as she was called in the village, was very fond of looking into the cottages, and studying the ways of the country generally. I never shall forget the occurrence of the yearly village fair or feast during her visit: her anxiety to be present—her remarkable costume on the occasion—the strong conviction borne in upon Eleanor and me that the Fat Lady in the centre booth was quite a secondary attraction to the Furrin Lady between us, with the raw lads and stolid farmers, who had come down from the hills, with their wise sheep-dogs at their heels. If they stared at her, however, Madame was not unobservant of them, and the critical power was on her side.

"These men and their dogs seem to me alike," said she. "Both of them—they stare so much and say so little."

"But the looks of the dogs are altogether the more *spirituels*," she added.

I should not like to record all that she said on the subject of our village feast. It was not complimentary, and to some extent the bitter general observations on our national amusements into which her disappointment betrayed her were justified by facts. But it was not our fault that, in translating village feast into *fête de village*, she had allowed her imagination to mislead her with false hopes. She had

expected a maypole, a dance of peasants, gay dresses, smiling faces, songs, fruit, coffee, flowers, and tasteful but cheap wares of small kinds in picturesque booths. She had adorned herself, and Eleanor and me, with collars and cuffs of elaborate make, and exquisite "get-up" by her own hands. She wore a pale pink and a dead scarlet geranium, together with a spray of wistaria leaf, with admirable taste, on her dark dress. Her hat was marvellous; her gloves were perfect. She had a few shillings in her pocket to purchase souvenirs for the household; her face beamed in anticipation of a day of simple, sociable, uncostly pleasure, such as we English are so lamentably ignorant of. But I think the only English thing she had prepared herself to expect was what she called "The Briteesh hooray."

Dirt, clamour, oyster-shells, ginger-beer bottles, stolid curiosity, beery satisfaction, care-worn stall-keepers with babies-in-arms and strange trust about their wares, and honesty over change, giddy-go-rounds, photograph booths, marionettes, the fat woman, the double-headed monstrosity, and the teeming beerhouses——

Poor Madame! The contrast was terrible. She would not enter a booth. She turned home in a rage of vexation, and shut herself up in her bedroom (I suspect with tears of annoyance and disappointment), whilst Eleanor and I went back into the feast, and were photographed with the dear boys and Clement.

Clement was getting towards an age when clever boys are not unapt to exercise their talents in depreciating home surroundings. He said it was no wonder that Madame was disgusted, and scolded us for taking her into the feast. Jack took quite a different view of the matter.

"The feast's very good fun in its way," said he; "and Madame only wants *tackling*. I'll tackle her."

"Bosh!" said Clement.

"Bet you a bob I link her through every mortal thing this afternoon," said Jack.

"You've cheek enough," said his elder brother.

But after luncheon, when Madame was again in her room, Jack came to me with a nosegay he had gathered, to beg me to arrange it properly, and put a paper frill round it. With some grass and fern-leaves, I made a tasteful bouquet, and added a frill, to Jack's entire satisfaction. He took it upstairs, and we heard him knock at Madame's

door. After a pause ("I'm sure she's crying again!" said Eleanor) Madame came out, and a warm discussion began between them, of which we only heard fragments. Madame's voice, as the shrillest, was most audible, and it rose into distinctness as she exclaimed, "Anything sôh dirrty, sôh meean, sôh folgaire, I nevaire saw."

Again the discussion proceeded, and we only caught a few of Jack's arguments about "customs of the country," "for the fun of it," &c.

"Fun?" said Madame.

"For a joke," said Jack.

"Ah, *c'est vrai*, for the choke," she said.

"And *avec moi*," Jack continued. "There's French for you, Madame! Come along!"

Madame laughed.

"She'll go," said Eleanor.

"*Eh bien!*" Madame cried gaily. "For the choke. *Avec vous, Monsieur Jack*. Ha! ha! *Allons!* Come along!"

"Link, Madame," said Jack, as they came downstairs, Madame smarter than ever, and bouquet in hand.

"Mais *link*? What is this?" said she.

"Take my arm," said Jack. "I'll treat you to everything."

"Mais *treat*? What is that?" said Madame, whose beaming good-humour only expanded the more when Jack explained that it was a pecuniary attention shown by rustic swains to their "young women."

As Clement came into the hall he met Madame hanging on Jack's arm, and absolutely radiant.

"You're not going into that beastly place again?" said he.

"For the choke, Monsieur Clement. Ah, *oui!* And with Monsieur Jack."

"You may as well come, Clem," said Eleanor, and we followed laughing.

Madame had now no time for discontent. Jack held her fast. He gave her gingerbread at one stall, and ginger-beer at another, and cracked nuts for her all along. He vowed that the oyster-shells were flowers, and the empty bottles bouquet-holders, and offered to buy her a pair of spectacles to see matters more clearly with.

"Couleur de rose?" laughed Madame.

We went in a body to the marionettes, and Madame screamed as we

climbed the inclined plane to enter, and scrambled down the frail scaffolding to the "reserved seats." These cost twopence a head, and were "reserved" for us alone. The dolls were really cleverly managed. They performed the closing scenes of a pantomime. The policeman came to pieces when clown and harlequin pulled at him. People threw their heads at each other, and shook their arms off. The transformation scene was really pretty; and it only added to the joke, that the dirty old proprietor burned the red light under our very noses, and a storm of chaff from Jack.

From the marionettes we went to the fat woman. A loathsome sight, which turned me sick; but, for some inexplicable reason, seemed highly to gratify Madame. She and Jack came out in fits of laughter, and he said, "Now for the two-headed monstrosity. It'll just suit you, Madame!"

At the door, Madame paused. "Mais, ce n'est pas pour des petites filles," she said, glancing at Eleanor and me.

"*Feel?*" said Jack, who was struggling through the crowd, which was dense here. "It feels nothing. It's in a bottle. Come along!"

"All right, Madame," said Eleanor, smiling. "We'll wait for you outside."

We next proceeded to the photographer's, where Jack and Madame were photographed together with Pincher.

By Madame's desire, she was now led to the "bazaar," where she bought a collar for Pincher, two charming china boxes, in the shape of dog's heads, for Eleanor and her mother, a fan for me, a walking-stick for Monsieur le pasteur, and some fishing-floats for Clement. By this time some children had gathered round us. The children of the district were especially handsome, and Madame was much smitten by their rosy cheeks and many-shaded flaxen hair.

"Ah!" she sighed, "I must make some little presents to the children;" and she looked anxiously over the stalls.

"Violin, one and six," said the saleswoman. "Nice work-box for a little girl, half-a-crown."

"Half a fiddlestick," said Jack, promptly. "What have you got for a halfpenny?"

"Them's halfpenny balls, whips, and dolls. Them churns and mugs is a halfpenny; and so's the little tin plates. Them's the halfpenny monkeys on sticks."

"Now, Madame," said Jack, "put that half-crown back, and give me a shilling. Twenty-two, twenty-three, twenty-four. There are your presents; and now for the children!"

Madame showed a decided disposition to reward personal beauty, which Jack overruled at once.

"The prettiest? I see myself letting you! Church Sunday scholars is my tip; and I shall put them through the Catechism test. Look here, young 'un, what's your name? Who gave you this name?"

"Ma godfeythers and godmoothers," the young urchin began.

"That'll do," said Jack. "Take your whip, and be thankful. Now, my little lass, who gave you this name?"

"Me godfeythers——"

"All right. Take your doll, and drop a courtesy; and mind you don't take the courtesy, and drop your doll. Now, my boy, tell me how many there be."

"Ten."

"Which be they? I mean, take your monkey, and make your bow. Next child, come up."

Clem, Eleanor, and I kept back the crowd as well as we could; but children pressed in on all sides. Clem brought a shilling out of his pocket, and handed it over to Jack.

"You've won your bet, old fellow," he said.

"You're a good sort, Clem. I say, lay it out among the halfpenny lot, will you, and then hand over. Keep a weather eye open for Dissenters, and send the Church children first."

The forty-eight halfpennyworths proved to be sufficient for all, however, though the orthodoxy of one or two seemed doubtful.

Madame was tired; but the position had pleased her, and she gave away the toys with a charming grace. We were leaving the fair when some small urchins, who had either got or hoped to get presents, and were (I suspected) partly impelled also by a sense of the striking nature of Madame's appearance, set up a lusty cheer.

Madame paused. Her eyes brightened, her thin lips parted with a smile. In a voice of intense satisfaction she murmured, "It is the Briteesh hooray!"

CHAPTER XXVI.

WE AND THE BOYS.—WE AND THE BOYS AND OUR FADS.—THE LAMP OF ZEAL.—STUDIES.—CLIQUE.—THE LESSONS OF EXPERIENCE.

OUR life on the moors was, I suppose, monotonous. I do not think we ever found it dull; but it was not broken, as a rule, by striking incidents.

The coming and going of the boys were our chief events. We packed for them when they went away. We wrote long letters to them, and received brief but pithy replies. We "tackled the governor" when they wanted clothes or pocket-money. We knew exactly how to bring the news of good-marks in school and increased subscriptions to cricket to bear in effective combination upon the parental mind, and were amply rewarded by half a sheet, acknowledging the receipt of a ten-shilling-piece in a match-box (the Arkwrights had a strange habit of sending coin of the realm by post done up like botanical specimens), with brief directions as to the care of garden or collection, and perhaps a rude outline of the head master's nose—"In a great hurry, from your loving and grateful Bro." We kept their gardens tidy, preserved their collections from dust, damp, and Keziah, and knitted socks for them. I learned to knit, of course. Every woman knits in that village of stone. And "between lights" Eleanor and I plied our needles on the boys' behalf, and counted the days to the holidays.

We had fresh "fads" every holidays. Many of our plans were ambitious enough, and the results would, no doubt, have been great had they been fully carried out. But Midsummer holidays, though long, are limited in length. Once we made ourselves into a Field Naturalists' Club. We girls gave up our "spare dress wardrobe" for a museum. We subdivided the shelves, and proposed to make a perfect collection of the flora and entomology of the neighbourhood. Eleanor and I really did continue to add specimens whilst the boys were at school; but they came home at Christmas devoted, body and soul, to the drama. We were soon converted to the new fad. The wardrobe became a side-scene in our theatre, and Eleanor and Clement "foyed" day and night with papers of powdered paint, and kettles of hot size, in converting canvas into scenery. "Theatricals" promised to be a lasting fancy, but the next holidays were in fine weather, and we made the drop-curtain into a tent.

When the boys were at school, Eleanor and I were fully occupied. We took a good deal of pains with our room: half of it was mine now. I had my knick-knack table as well as Eleanor, my own books and pictures, my own photographs of the boys and of the dear boys, my own pot plants, and my own dog—a pug, given to me by Jack, and named Saucebox. In Jack's absence, Pincher also looked on me as his mistress.

Like most other conscientious girls, we had rules and regulations of our own devising: private codes, generally kept in cipher, for our own personal self-discipline, and laws common to us both for the employment of our time in joint duties—lessons, parish work, and so forth. I think we made rather too many rules, and that we remade them too often. I make fewer now, and easier ones, and let them much more alone. I wonder if I really keep them better? But if not, may God, I pray Him, send me back the restless zeal, the hunger and thirst after righteousness, which He gives in early youth! It is so easy to become more thick-skinned in conscience, more tolerant or evil, more hopeless of good, more careful of one's own comfort and one's own property, more self-satisfied in leaving high aims and great deeds to enthusiasts, and then to believe that one is growing older and wiser. And yet those high examples, those good works, those great triumphs over evil, which single hands effect sometimes, we are all grateful for, when they are done, whatever we may have said of the doing. But we speak of saints and enthusiasts for good, as if some special gift or genius were made to them in middle age which is withheld from other men. Is it not rather that some few souls keep alive the lamp of zeal and high desire which God lights for most of us while life is young?

Eleanor and I worked at our lessons by ourselves. We always had, as we said, "the mother to fall back upon." With her we read Schiller, and in later times Dante. We often had to fall back, in our progress through the "*Divina Commedia*," upon Mrs. Arkwright's admirable Italian scholarship; in spite of all the helps the library afforded us, the best of dictionaries, English "cribs," and about six of those elaborate commentaries upon the poem, of which Italians have been so prolific.

During the winter the study of languages was commonly uppermost; in summer, I think sketching was more favoured.

"To go sketching with the mother" was a treat. It is true the comparison between her skill and ours was depressing; but then we could always rely on her to help us out of our difficulties; indeed, we seldom got into so many when she was with us, for the fatality for choosing unsuitable subjects which besets young sketchers was neutralized by her influence. She used to find bits of hedge scenery, a broken stile or gate, with a study of docks or nettles by it, or some simple building within our powers, and show us how pretty a sketch would come of it, with good drawing, and effective light and shade. Then I, too, learned to know one tree from another, to make studies of the bark and foliage of each, and to spend hours that flew by like moments over drawings "with something of the mother's touch."

I still had a great love for colour. I could not forget my great-grandfather's lessons. Indeed, when I was fourteen I made some studies of flowers on the Vandaleur model, and put delicate distances of appropriate scenery in pencil as a background, which met with Mrs. Arkwright's warm approbation. I made a set of them for a birthday present to her.

But that was when I was back at the "Vine" again.

Eleanor and I were not always at home. We generally went visiting somewhere, at least once a year.

I think it was good for us. Great as were the advantages of the life I now lived over an existence wasted in a petty round of ignoble gossip and social struggle, it had the drawback of being almost too self-sufficing, perhaps—I am not certain—a little too laborious. I do think, but for me, it must, at any rate, have become the latter. I am so much less industrious, energetic, clever and good in every way than Eleanor, for one thing, that my very idleness holds us back; and I think a taste for gaiety (I simply mean being gay, not balls and parties) and for social pleasure, and for pretty things, and graceful "situations" runs in my veins with my French blood, and helps to break the current of our labours.

We led lives of considerable intellectual activity, constant occupation, and engrossing interest. We were apt to "foy" at our fads to the extent of grudging meal-times and sleep. Indeed, at one time a habit obtained with us of leaving the table in turn as we finished our respective meals. One member of the family after another would rise, bend his or her head for a silent "grace," and depart to the work in

hand. I have known the table gradually deserted in this fashion till Mr. Arkwright was left alone. I remember going back one day into the room, and seeing him so. My entrance partially aroused him from a brown study. (He was at all times very "absent.") He rose, said grace aloud for the benefit of the company—which had dispersed—and withdrew to his study. But we abolished this uncivilized custom in conclave, and thenceforth sat our meals out to the end.

So free were we in our isolation upon those Yorkshire moors from the trammels of conventionality (one might almost say, civilization!), that I think we should have come to begrudge the ordinary interchange of the neighbourly courtesies of life, but for occasional lectures from Mrs. Arkwright, and for going out visiting from time to time.

It was not merely that a life of running in and out of other people's houses, and chatting the same bits of news threadbare with one acquaintance after another, as at Rifebury, would have been unendurable by us. The rare arrival of a visitor from some distant country-house to call at the Vicarage was the signal for every one, who could do so with decency, to escape from the unwelcome interruption. But as we grew older, Mrs. Arkwright would not allow this. The boys, indeed, were hard to coerce; they "bolted" still when the door-bell rang; but domestic authority, which is apt to be magnified on "the girls," overruled Eleanor and me for our good, and the mother—who reasoned with us far more than she commanded—convinced us of how much selfishness there was in this, as in all acts of discourtesy.

But what do we not owe to her good counsels? In how many evening talks has she not warned us of the follies, affectations, or troubles to which our lives might specially be liable! Against despising interests that are not our own, or graces which we have chosen to neglect, against the danger of satire, against the love or the fear of being thought singular, and, above all, against the petty pride of clique.

"I do not know which is the worst," I remember her saying, "a religious clique, an intellectual clique, a fashionable clique, a moneyed clique, or a family clique. And I have seen them all."

"Come, mother," said Eleanor, "you cannot persuade us you would not have more sympathy with the intellectual than the moneyed clique, for instance?"

"I should have warmly declared so myself, at one time," said Mrs.

Arkwright, "but I have a vivid remembrance of a man belonging to an artistic clique, to whose house I once went with some friends. My friends were artists also, but their minds were enlarged, instead of being narrowed, by one chief pursuit. Their special art gave them sympathy with all others, as the high cultivation of one virtue is said to bring all the rest in its train. But this man talked the shibboleth of his craft over one's head to other members of his clique with a defiance of good manners arising more from conceit than ignorance of the ways of society; and with a transparent intention of being overheard and admired which reminded me of the little self-conscious conceits of children before visitors. He was one of a large family with the same peculiarities, joined to a devout admiration of each other. Indeed, they combined the artistic clique and the family clique in equal proportions. From the conversation at their table you would have imagined that there was but one standard of good for poor humanity, that of one 'school' of one art, and absolutely no one who quite came up to it but the brothers, sisters, parents, cousins, or connections by marriage of your host. Now, I honestly assure you that the only other man really like this one that I ever met, was what is called a 'self-made' man in a commercial clique. Money was his standard, and he seemed to be as completely unembarrassed as my artist friend by the weight of any other ideas than his own, or by any feeling short of utter satisfaction with himself. Their contempt for the conventionalities of society was about equal. My artist friend had passed a sweeping criticism for my benefit now and then (there could be no conversation where no second opinion was allowed), and it was with perhaps a shade less of condescension—a shade more of friendliness—that my commercial friend once stopped some remarks of mine with the knowing observation, 'Look here, ma'am. Whenever I hear this, that, and the other bragged about a party, what I always say is this, I don't want you to tell me what he *is*, but what he *'as*.'

Eleanor and I laughed merrily at the anecdote, even if we were not quite converted to Mrs. Arkwright's views. And I must in justice add that every visit which has taken us from home—every fresh experience which has enlarged our knowledge of the world—has confirmed the truth of her sage and practical advice.

If at home we have still inclined to feel it almost a duty to be proud


of intellectual tastes, quite a duty to be proud of orthodox opinions, and, at the worst, a very amiable weakness indeed to think that there are no boys like our boys, a wholesome experience of having other people's tastes and views crammed down our throats has modified our ideas in this respect. A strong dose of eulogistic biography of the brothers of a gushing acquaintance has made the names of Clem and Jack sacred to our domestic circle for ever; and what I have endured from a mangy, overfed, ill-tempered Skye-terrier, who is the idol of a lady of our acquaintance, has led me sometimes to wonder if visitors at the Rectory are ever oppressed by the dear boys.

I suppose the mother is right after all!

(*To be continued.*)

WORD PICTURES FROM ITALY—*continued.*

THE GALERIA REALE.

“ HIS gallery, which is better known by its old name of the ‘Uffizi Gallery,’ now changed to *Galeria Reale*, or Royal Gallery, is much larger than the Pitti, that is to say, it contains many more pictures and a great deal of sculpture, but the rooms are not so large or fine; there are more of them, and they are smaller. It is joined to the Pitti in a very curious way. One gallery is on one side of the river and one on the other, and the Ponte Vecchio, about which I told you, with its jewellery shops, is between. A covered gallery, running along the top of the bridge, leads from the Pitti to the Uffizi.”

KITTY. A gallery on the top of a bridge!

MYSELF. Yes; you should remember that the bridge is a covered one, lined with shops. Well, the gallery is carried over the shops.

KITTY. Is there anything in the gallery?

MYSELF. Oh, yes, the first part of it, before the bridge, is full of most precious drawings and sketches from the very hands of the great masters, Guido, Raphael, and so on. Then it narrows, and you wind along for a quarter of a mile between two walls, hung with tapestry so exquisite that you can hardly believe it is needlework. Did you ever see any?

BLANCHE. No; but mamma gave me a little book about the Bayeux tapestry and the Empress Matilda, who worked it and made pictures of the conquest of England.

MYSELF. Well, this tapestry represents all kinds of different subjects, a great many Scripture ones. One in particular, the feast of Ahasuerus, when Esther is moved to plead for her countrymen, is so wonderfully done that it had all the effect of a fine picture. Then there were large landscapes, hunting parties, fruit and flowers, and so forth; and at the end hung a framed picture of the Madonna and Child, which I made sure *was* a painting till I came near and saw that it, too, was needlework. Then more steps, another shorter and narrower gallery, steps again, and we were in the long corridor of the Galeria Reale. Pictures hung on one side, and a row of windows on the other looked over the Arno. The gallery was full of copyists, i.e., artists who are allowed to copy the pictures, and sit steadily at their work nearly the whole day.

BLANCHE. How I should like to be a copyist!

MYSELF. There is one room, called the *Tribuna*, which is full of gems, both of paintings and sculpture; and this room is so crowded that it was only on the last visit I paid to it that I could get a sight of a picture which I liked better than any other of the same subject I had seen.

BLANCHE. What was the subject?

MYSELF. The Virgin and Child by Correggio. It is quite a small picture, and at first sight does not impress you so much as many others; but the more you look at it the more beauties you discover. It is not that the Virgin is so lovely, for it is by no means a faultless face.

BLANCHE. Do describe it, as you did the other picture.

MYSELF. It does not admit of much description. The Virgin is kneeling—gazing at the child, whom she has laid on a part of her robe; that is all. Her face is full of tenderness, and yet there is an adoring reverence in it which says at once that she is not only a mother looking at her child. The love, the holy purity, the reverence and self-devotion expressed in the face is past description; and then the lovely rounded form of the child, the depth and softness of the colouring, give the whole picture a magic charm; at least, it did to me. I was half way along the corridor, on my way down-stairs for the last time, when a sudden longing came over me for one more look, and I had to go back for another good-bye.

BLANCHE (*with a sigh*). Shall I ever see these pictures, I wonder?

MYSELF. Some day you may, Blanche, but every year put off is a year gained to you. You will understand and admire much more, and with a much fuller enjoyment, when you are older and have read more.

BLANCHE. I don't see what reading has to do with admiring pictures.

MYSELF. No, I daresay you don't now, but when you *do* come to see what I have been talking about, you will. You know there are many degrees of admiration: Charlie, for instance, admired the picture of Lord Raglan's Charger which I showed him yesterday, but he would have understood and admired it more if he had been old enough to have known a little about the Crimean war, and Lord Raglan, and so on; don't you think so?

BLANCHE (*reluctantly*). Yes; but he is a child.

"And you are fourteen," I said, smiling. "Well, Blanche there is a good deal left for you to know yet."

VALLOMBROSA.

CHARLIE. Have you any more pictures for me to look at, Miss Hay?

I like those funny coloured ones of men and women; and there was one of a cart which had ten people in it—I counted them; and one man was sitting underneath in a net. He looked awfully jolly, all in the dust.

MYSELF. That was a cart such as you see in and about Naples, full of country people. But I don't think you will want to look at pictures this time, for we are going on what I suppose you would call an "awfully jolly" expedition to Vallombrosa; so sit down here by me, and listen.

KITTY. Where is Vallombrosa?

MYSELF. A short distance from Florence. We had heard much of its beauties, and, one fine morning, we determined to see it, though we did not exactly know how we were to go nor how long it would take us. I should tell you that "Val Ombrosa" means "shady valley," corrupted now into Vallombrosa, spelt as one word; and when we get there you will see how fitting a name it is. We started on the 9th of May. It was intensely hot, so we left Florence by the Roman railway at five o'clock in the morning; much to the surprise of our English landlady, who held up her hands at us. We breakfasted

at the railway station, where, unlike a good many English stations, they give you the most exquisite coffee and bread and butter. We got out at a place called "Pontassieve," and, being told it was only a little more than two miles to Pelago (a little village at the foot of the mountain we had to ascend), we set out to walk, and of course found that it was five.

BLANCHE. Why do you say "of course," Miss Hay?

MYSELF. Because an Italian is very seldom accurate in what he says, and nearly always tells you what he thinks you will like to hear, and not what is the exact truth. The people at Pontassieve thought we should prefer having two miles to walk rather than five, and so they said it was two. However, as it was so early, the air was fresh and pleasant, and we enjoyed getting off the hot pavement into the country very much. Then we fell in with a nice old post woman, who told us that if we walked with her she would show us a short cut. This led us over some cool grassy paths, under chestnut trees. I was quite sorry that we could not understand the country patois sufficiently well to have a real conversation with this bright old woman, who chirruped away to us, nodding her head in a most lively way, and who at parting was charmed with the price of a pound of sugar, and walked briskly off with her bag of letters, giving us a dozen thanks with eyes as well as words. Pelago is a little place, situated very picturesquely among the mountains, and surrounded by chestnuts and oaks. It was eight o'clock by the time we arrived; and we were quite ready for more breakfast after our walk, and found a good one at the clean little inn. They gave us beef steak, cream cheese, and very good wine. A dog and a cat sat gravely on each side of the table, waiting for our remains.

CHARLIE. It sounds like dinner more than breakfast.

MYSELF. So it was, or rather a kind of luncheon; but think what we had done, and what we had still got to do. I assure you we were very glad of the beef steak.

KITTY and BLANCHE. How did you get up the mountain? You could not walk—and I thought you said it was a shady valley; and is it a house and garden, or a church, or what? and——

MYSELF. Stop, stop, please! Remember the rule! But it is my fault: I ought to have told you at the beginning, that it was a large monastery we were going to see.

KITTY. I don't know what a monastery is.

MYSELF. A place where monks live. I think I told you that they had all been done away with before I went to Italy; but the buildings remained, and a few monks were left to take care of them. This monastery at Vallombrosa was a very large place—meant to hold four hundred monks in times gone by, and now there are only four. But we shall soon come to it.

The ascent took about two hours, and we rode up on horseback, our dinner being tied up in a cloth and slung to our saddles. It was the same as our luncheon, only the beef steak was cold instead of hot; at least it started cold, but was tepid when it reached the top, being half cooked a second time by the heat of the sun.

BLANCHE. How very nasty!

MYSELF. We didn't think so. Travelling teaches one very quickly not to be over-nice.

BLANCHE (*with a little toss*). I should not like to travel, then.

MYSELF. Oh, yes, you would. You would soon get to enjoy the pleasure, and laugh at the little discomforts. My horse was, I feel sure, related to a camel, from his size and paces, so that I was not exactly on a bed of roses; and the heat was so great as to make my head throb, but, half-way up, we got into the pine-tree regions, which was a great comfort; and from thence to the top, the deep shade and deliciously fragrant smell of the trees made us forget everything else. This road through the woods was made by the monks, and is paved the whole way up with large flat stones. Now and then, to right or left, there is a little clearing made for a stone cross which stands on a pedestal of two steps; and here and there we came upon a fountain with a pious inscription.

KITTY. Did the monks make the crosses?

MYSELF. Yes, and the fountains too. To my mind, it was as refreshing as the grateful shade of the trees, to see these quiet reminders of faith and devotion in such a wild secluded place. By-and-by the trees cleared away on either side, and we saw the monastery just in front of us—a very large, imposing-looking range of buildings, with a tower in the middle and a court in front, enclosed by railings. It stood in a valley on the mountain, as it were—a lovely little spot, well meriting its name from the cool shade which brooded over it, and the stream which wandered through it, and kept it emerald green in spite of the scorching Italian sun.

Behind the monastery rose the mountain, clothed to the very top with fir, and below and around, such a view! I got down joyfully from my bony steed, and turned round at the exclamations of my companions, to see a soft slope of bright green meadow stretching down from the convent—framed by the fir and chestnut woods which shut it in like a little island of beauty—and, far away down in the distance, the valley of the Arno, with the river shining through it like a tiny silver thread. But the loveliest prospect of all was from the Paradisino, a little house used for retreat and penance, perched on a bare rock above the main building.

BLANCHE. What is penance?

MYSELF. Punishment. I suppose the monks were sent there to be alone, away from their companions, when they had done anything wrong. We walked up to it and got a farther sight of the Val d'Arezzo, stretching away to Pisa and Leghorn, an amphitheatre of mountains in every variety of tint, from deep purple to palest grey, Pistoja in a curve of the hills, Florence in a heat haze, only just visible to our dazzled eyes by a sparkle or two where the sun caught some shining surface. To our right was a deep gorge, clothed to the bottom with fern and acacias, down which tumbled a waterfall.

KITTY. It must have been too nice for a punishment place.

MYSELF. Yes; so we said, but the house itself looked dismal and uncomfortable. There was a little chapel, and an organ on which the poet Milton is said to have played when he visited Vallombrosa, and the path to the rock is called "Milton's Walk."

CHARLIE. What was the great house like?

MYSELF. I will tell you. We went back to it, our guide rang the bell, and one of the four monks who lived there came to the door, and looked quite pleased to see visitors.

BLANCHE. They must be very dull in such a large house by themselves.

MYSELF. Yes; our guide, the son of the Pelago innkeeper, seemed to pity them very much, but they themselves looked happy and cheerful; and indeed the place is so quiet and beautiful that I did not wonder. I was not allowed to see the monastery itself.

CHARLIE. Why not?

MYSELF. Because no women are allowed to go into a place which is specially set apart for men. I was permitted to see the chapel,

and sat down there while my brother went over the rest of the building. He reported only two things worth seeing, however: the kitchen, which has a fountain in the centre and a stream of clear water running right through it, and the dining hall.

CHARLIE. A stream of water in the kitchen! How funny! What was it for? To wash the dishes in?

MYSELF. Yes; and to keep everything cool and fresh, I suppose; and that, in a hot climate, is a luxury you can hardly understand. When we came out of the building we wandered about, enchanted, and felt as if we would gladly have spent a week, gipsy fashion, under the trees. I never see a forget-me-not now without thinking of Vallombrosa: they were larger and bluer there than I ever saw them anywhere else. We had our dinner in a field, by the side of a stone reservoir, into which fell a running spring of ice-cold water. Here we cooled our cream cheese, and wine and butter (we could not very well bathe our beef steak, *Blanche*), and enjoyed ourselves exceedingly, especially when, dinner over, we lay down on our shawls, spread on *such* thick grass, and, lulled by cuckoos, nightingales, and the sound of murmuring water, fell fast asleep!

After this came the descent, which I must say frightened me to death. You know I told you the path was paved, and it was exactly like going down the roof of a house. My camel, though led the whole way, kept slipping with his hind feet among the stones; and I could hardly admire the tufts of maiden-hair fern growing over little runlets of water by the roadside, and was only thankful to get to the bottom, and rest on a very hard horsehair sofa at the Pelago inn.

We drove back to Pontassieve by moonlight in a funny little chaise, drawn by a very fast pony with a head-dress of long scarlet tassels and bells, the fireflies fitting about in all directions; and we got to Florence at ten o'clock.



HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.



Y DEAR TOBY,

I thought that I had given you enough, and more than enough, to do when I had suggested to you that you should turn your mind to trout-fishing, butterflies, and flowers; but it seems from your last letter that you are insatiable. You write for something "quite new," that you "have never tried before." This is not easy to find; but, if you persist in having some new occupation during the autumn, suppose you take to mice and squirrel hunting. The stubble fields will be full of mice just now, while the harvest is being gathered in; and I will tell you how, as a youngster, I used to catch the mischievous little animals. At this distance of time, I am sorry to say I cannot recal the exact size and appearance of the mice I caught, so that I am unable to tell you their species. I can remember that they were small—smaller than the ordinary house mouse; but whether they were shrew mice or harvest mice I cannot exactly say. If you have read Mr. White's "Natural History of Selborne," which everybody ought to read, you will find a description of harvest mice; but it hardly tallies with what I can remember of the mice we used to catch. In the first place, I never found the nests he mentions about the size of a cricket ball, composed of platted blades of grass or wheat. The mice we found had distinctly "runs," as we called them, just below the surface of the ground; and we came upon their nests in the ground. You had better hunt for yourself, Toby, and compare the specimens you get in your chase with the descriptions in the books. Get an old kitchen knife, and a shoot of a lilac tree peeled white, and a stick; and, if you possess a dog of any kind it will be all the better, start for the newly-cut stubble fields even before the corn has been carried, for many of the mice go with the sheaves. You will soon come across a little hole in the ground, not running perpendicularly into the earth so much as horizontally, about two inches below the surface. First look about a yard or so all round, to see if there are any more holes, and be careful not to miss the "bolts," which are holes sometimes carefully concealed

by a few dried leaves, or something of the kind, covering the entrance. If there be any holes close around, block them up so that nothing can escape, and then thrust your lilac wand as far as it will go into the hole you have left open for your mining operations. You will find that your old kitchen knife will serve admirably as a spade: follow the lilac wand, cutting up the hole to the surface, and then push the wand in again, and proceed till you come to a mouse or the end of a run. Probably, just as you are digging away vigorously, you will hear a squeak, and the little mouse will dash out of the hole, and then your companion must be ready with his stick, or your dog with his mouth, or you will lose your prey. The object of the wand is that without it you might lose your way, and having blocked up a bit of the hole in digging, might not easily be able to find it again; whereas, by following the direction of the wand, you know that you are following the "run."

Sometimes you will have omitted to block up a bolt, and the mice will escape, unless your friend with his stick perceive them as they bolt. Possibly you will not think this much fun, Toby. I remember we used as youngsters to get some amusement out of a good mouse-hunting afternoon, and perhaps you can if you try. You will find mice in the hay-fields too, but they seem to burrow deeper there than in the corn-fields; besides which, you do more damage by cutting up the grass with your knife than you can in a stubble. Of course, Toby, you can get some mouse-hunting anywhere, but it is not everywhere that squirrel-hunting is possible. I remember that the first school I ever went to was situated on the borders of one of the few English "forests" which remain, and there, the squirrels being plentiful, squirrel-hunting was in great vogue. Every one belonged to a squirrel-hunting clique, and every one had his "squalers" and his "club." The organization of the hunt was complete, and the bags made were not inconsiderable. Squirrels, Toby, you must know, build nests made of twigs and leaves, and grass. They like fir-trees, perhaps, best, but do not disdain beeches and hawthorns, and even a big old holly-tree. It was therefore an important fact to discover a nest when out upon the hunt. But I will try and tell you all I recollect about my first "skug" hunt. Arrived at a school consisting of from eighty to one hundred boys, and not knowing any one of them, you can imagine I was rather out of my element; but on the third day from my arrival I found

myself more at home; for having had an early predilection for outdoor pursuits, and having even sipped already of the tempting cup of poaching, I could enter with avidity into the "skug" hunt which was organised on the day in question. In the morning I was invited to attend the hunt, and duly initiated in the rules and method of proceeding. During school-hours, I had helped in the manufacture of my own "squaler" surreptitiously. Sixpence, my instructors informed me, would set me up in weapons; and one of them having sneaked across the street, brought back under his coat a piece of cane about two feet long, and a lump of lead. Then came the melting of the lead—in a prefect's study if I remember right. The cane was leant upright against a chair; round it, about two inches from the top, a cone of paper, or, rather, of the back of a copy-book, similar in shape to the paper cone in which small shopkeepers wrap lollipops and brown sugar, was firmly tied in such a manner that the cane was surrounded with the paper; so that the top two inches stood, as it were, in the centre of the conical cup thus formed. Into this the molten lead was poured, and left to cool, and then, the paper being removed, I saw with delight my weapon ready. The lead was moulded round the cane in the shape of a pear, the edges were trimmed, and a little lead chipped off, to get the balance better, and I proudly handled this novel instrument of the chase. The day wore on, school was over and dinner, and, it being a half-holiday, the hunting party set out. We numbered about fifteen or twenty, and as we ascended the hill towards the forest, I observed my companions. Many had "clubs" as well as "squalers." These were short, heavy sticks, suitable for throwing in the air—boomerangs, in fact, except that they had not the curve in them. All were highly polished by wear and sand-paper, and oil, and had great notches cut on them; some more, and some less. The notches, I was told, represented the number of "skugs" which had fallen to the aim of the owner of the club. Another carried an empty bag, and another, a pair of what I ascertained were climbing irons, while the leader of the expedition had a horn slung round his shoulder. Never was an expedition more like a vision of the days of Robin Hood and Little John. Ascending a steep road between mounds covered with beautiful turf, on which the sheep had worn terraces, we arrived at the border of the forest, and struck at once into its depths, bursting through the bracken and

underwood, till we came upon a lovely glade, carpeted with bright green turf, and bordered by fine oaks and Spanish chestnuts. Here the hunters stopped, for a match had been arranged between C. and H., two of the biggest boys. C. had the reputation, so I was told, of being the best at throwing a "squaler." He was said to be able to throw it 120 yards. H. had challenged him, and the contest came off in this glade in the forest. Swirling them round their heads, and taking a long run, the competitors sent their squalers whistling through the air. It has since occurred to me that squaler may mean simply *squealer*, and allude to the noise it makes in its passage through the air. The squalers flew like rockets, and fell so that their heavy heads of lead sank deep into the soft turf. The match was over, the distance had been paced carefully, and the party found themselves at the lower end of the glade. Striking once more into the depths of the wood, we found ourselves under the shade of a cluster of very big beech-trees. The leader sounded his horn, and every one stood still as a mouse. My companions had most of them their hands to their ears, and were listening evidently for some sound : following their example, I strained every nerve to hear, and soon perceived that above our heads, from the midst of the boughs of the very tree under which we were standing, a sound came, which was more like the scratching of a quill pen on paper, perhaps, than anything else. The experienced hunters at once recognised the sound. We had found our game, and the hunt was soon to begin. The sound came from a squirrel. His sharp little teeth grated against the husk of the nut or beech-mast he was eating, and produced the scratching noise which the hunters heard. So faint a sound could hardly have been heard except in the stillly depths of a big wood or forest. No doubt he had been disturbed at first by the sound of the horn, and the rustling of the hunters' feet among the bracken ; but, when all was still again, he had begun once more to nibble, and had so betrayed his whereabouts to his enemies. Once more the horn sounded, and orders were given to surround the tree : a circle was formed by the hunters, at about ten yards from the trunk of the tree ; the boy with the climbing irons advanced, adjusted them to his feet, and without another word began his ascent. I had received careful instructions as to the rule of throwing squalers. While the circle round the tree was maintained no squalers were to be thrown, only the clubs, and those

but by a select few; if, however, the squirrel once passed the circumference every squaler might be launched against him. This rule was necessary for the safety of life and limb. A squaler descending perpendicularly on one's head from the top of a beech-tree would hurt considerably, while the lead upon it would make its fall more rapid, and therefore less easy to avoid. As it was, the risk was enough to make one careful; but, somehow or other, no one was ever hurt. To every one was given a definite post in the circle. All who might throw their clubs were placed on one side of the tree—that opposite to the side up which the climber was making his way. This prevented a confused *mêlée* among the clubs when hurled in the air, while those on the other side of the tree knew that they were to expect the descent of the clubs among them; moreover, it was their duty to pick the clubs up and return them to their owners, each of whom had his initials carved on some part of his club. These clubs were somewhat like those which you, Toby, may have thrown at cocoa-nuts at a fair, if you have ever indulged in the game of “three sticks a penny.” Sometimes a hole was bored in the top, and molten lead poured into it to weight the end. The circle round the beech-tree was completed. The hunters waited with anxiety the result of the labours of the boy, who by this time was half-way up the tree. Those who had the privilege of throwing clubs stood with their carefully-polished weapons in their hands, looking intently at the upper branches of the beech. Suddenly a voice from among the topmost leaves exclaimed, “Ware skug,” and almost immediately a fox-coloured squirrel appeared, running along one of the wide spreading branches. A shout of “ware clubs,” which in plain language meant look out for your head, and a volley of the aforesaid missiles launched against the terrified little animal gave at once life and activity to the scene. The squirrel tried to turn and go back to the main trunk, but before he had got half-way the cap of the climbing boy appeared between him and his destination. His only chance was to run to the end of the branch, and this he did. Arrived there, with a clever spring he jumped, so that he seemed almost to fly, to the branch of the next tree. This last movement put him out of the boundary of the ring, and a shout of “squalers” gave the signal for another volley. The squirrel was untouched, but a well-directed squaler hit the slender bough on which he was running, close by him, and shook him from his perch. He had

been at the very end of the bough, and, unfortunately for him, none of the boughs beneath projected far enough to arrest his downward course. Down he came, turning a somersault in the air, but landed on his feet, and immediately darted off along the ground towards a clump of bracken. But the ground under the beech-trees was open; no under-wood afforded him a shelter from his foes, and once more clubs and squalers were launched at him. Again he escaped, for it is no easy matter to hit a squirrel with a squaler from a long distance, and reaching another tree, began to run up the smooth face of the bark. This last effort was intercepted by a fatal blow from a club, and the excitement of the chase was at an end. The hunters collected round the leader, who solemnly drew out his knife, and made some blood flow from the still warm little corpse. I heard my name called, and was told that, being a fresh hand, I must receive my "first blood." As it was useless to resist, I calmly submitted, I remember, to be copiously anointed on my cheeks and hands with the victim's blood. This was my initiation to the brotherhood of the chase. The fortunate hunter who had killed the game cut a new notch on his club in the presence of the hunt, and that also having been sprinkled in the same way, the hunters changed their ground.

Such, Toby, was my first squirrel-hunt. Perhaps you will think it very cruel, and pity the poor squirrel very much; and probably you will be the more inclined to do so if your experience of squirrels is confined to pet specimens. Tame squirrels, which live in a cage and spin their wheel, and eat nuts, are very different creatures to wild squirrels. A wild squirrel can bite, and that very sharply—*experto crede*—and perhaps, for this reason, we felt fewer scruples about hunting them in the forest. I remember we used to take their nests and keep the young ones as pets. I do not remember ever finding more than two little ones in a nest. We fed them on milk till they grew strong enough to crack nuts and eat the buds from young branches of trees. Did you ever remark, Toby, how a squirrel cracks a nut? You will see that he nibbles off the pointed top, and then, putting one of his long teeth in, he splits the nut in half just as we would use a penknife for the same purpose. We always used to skin the squirrels we killed, and cured the skins for sisters at home and for the tobacco pouches of elder brothers. If you do not fancy mice or squirrel hunting, perhaps, Toby, you would like to take up the pursuit of water-rats. I remember we

went to work in rather an original way in the matter of water-rats, at this very school where I have told you I learnt "skug-hunting." One of the boys of a previous generation had brought from home (they originally came from Paris, I believe) two pea-shooters; but they were no ordinary pea-shooters; indeed, it is questionable whether they could appropriately be called so, for they were not used for shooting peas, but clay pellets. The tube was of brass, about six feet long, and was inclosed in a cane to prevent its being bent, I suppose. Then there were a pair of nippers, much like a bullet mould; the only difference being that, instead of pouring lead in, you took a pinch out of a lump of clay. By keeping the mould well dipped in oil the clay was prevented from sticking, and a beautiful perfectly round little pellet of clay was the result. These were baked in an oven till they were quite hard, and then were ready for use. They exactly fitted the bore of the brass pipe, and were the size of a large green pea. This weapon was most effective; it would throw the pellets with a good force at least fifty yards, and at thirty or forty would kill any small bird. At any rate, it was all-sufficient for the water-rats, as they sat leisurely on the bank of the river in the evening. The advantage of this pea-shooter was that, being noiseless, the game was not disturbed; and even if you missed a shot or two first you probably would not disturb the prey sufficiently to drive it away. Wood-pigeons in the forest, birds of all sorts (I remember one boy killing a kingfisher with it), even rabbits were not too large game for its powers; and it would even kill a fish under water, provided that the water was shallow. If you can get a bit of brass piping from some plumber you would not find the making of the pellets a very formidable difficulty, so long as you were not afraid of dirtying your hands. It is not very easy to become a good shot with this instrument, but if once you can hit a bird pretty surely you will find it very useful, for it has all the merits of a noiseless gun for such purposes; and if your object be to get birds for stuffing you will find that the pellets will not injure the plumage as much as shot, and that is an advantage. Whether you take to squirrel hunting or shooting water-rats with a pea-shooter, you should remember to save some of both furs for your dubbing bag and fly-making.

Your affectionate Uncle, &c.

THE WHITE SHELL.

By the Author of Gabriel and his Adventures.



N old-fashioned red-brick house, grey and green with age; an old lady with snow-white hair and pallid face; a spinster daughter; the lady in grey, and a tall footman—how deeply they are stamped on my memory! Pictures painted in childhood, growing mellow with age, yet not losing their distinctness. As I stop to recall the past scenes, they seem to grow out of the darkness, like the black pictures of the old masters.

The whole story lies in a shell—not a nutshell, as the saying is, but a sea-shell. I was only a little girl of eight years old; please to remember that before I begin: my name was Adelaide Waters, one of a large family, and yet I lived singularly alone. Fond of solitude, I sought out secret places where I could tell myself tales, act all kinds of characters, and build up romances about the houses and people in our neighbourhood. The fact of being a girl was a trouble to me at that time, and when I came out of my dreams I was eager after games and boyish sports; cricket, jumping, hockey, and archery were the amusements of the day, and in some I was as expert as my brothers. A small black-eyed governess taught us our lessons, but for the most part, especially during the summer, our play-hours were entirely our own: clad in sensible pinafores, we were allowed to amuse ourselves as we pleased—to make dirt pies, climb trees, act Punch and Judy in the laurel bushes, and to lead a thoroughly happy, healthy, frolicsome life, such as country children love. The Punch and Judy game required both skill and courage, at least on Judy's part. Two would dress up in scarlet and gay colours, and mounting one of the big laurels that lined the broad walk, give a spirited representation of the puppet-show, which of course ended in the knocking down of the unhappy wife, who had to fall as best she could without injury to herself. The support of the character generally fell to my share, and I learnt in time to fall with great effect, catching hold of the boughs in such a way as not to hurt myself, beyond a little knuckle scraping.

The walk we loved best was the road that took us to Greenwood Park, the residence of Mrs. Bush, the old lady with the white hair.

How well I remember the long green lane, with the wooden bridge crossing the bubbling brook, where sometimes we fished with crooked pins, and sailed boats, formed of the scooped-out rind of a good, tough, old vegetable marrow; and the dark fir-wood beyond, delightful in its mysterious dimness; and the broad, level park, where we picked up the shining horse-chestnuts, and swung upon the drooping branches of the trees. The grim old house struck awe into our hearts; our parents used to visit with the old lady; and Miss Bush, kind, active, and cheerful, was frequently at our house; but we children had never set foot in the stately mansion, and a visit to Mrs. Bush would have been as formidable as a visit to the Queen at Windsor Castle.

Miss Mound, the governess, would never allow us to wander in the direction of the house; but sometimes one of the inmates of the Park would cross our path, or pass within range of our curious eyes. "The lady in grey!" burst with a suppressed murmur from our lips on such occasions, and with bated breath we huddled together, and watched her out of sight.

Who was the lady in grey?

The once beautiful Maria Bush; then the young, stricken widow, with a mind unhinged by grief.

Mrs. Bush had lost her husband many years ago; her eldest son, having married a great heiress, lived at a fine place at the other end of the county; the younger son was in the navy, and away from home the greater part of his life, and the old lady lived alone with her two daughters. Charlotte, the elder, was not gifted with the beauty of her sister, and she busied herself in the interests of the poor and the parish schools; while the lovely Maria became the happy bride of Captain Sitwell, a friend and messmate of her sailor brother. Dark days, however, soon followed bright ones. Captain Sitwell, appointed to the command of a frigate on a foreign station, was forced to leave his young wife once more beneath her mother's roof. The fine Atlantic clipper that carried him, I was going to say, to his destination, never reached the end of her voyage: whether she drifted too far north, and got amongst the icebergs; or whether she foundered in a gale at sea, will never now be known. The ship was seen no more, and not a soul escaped to tell the tragic tale.

They could not make the unhappy Maria believe that her husband was dead; she dared not face the truth, and refused to accept it.

"I know that he will come some day, I know he will return," was the persistent reply of the poor afflicted girl. She would not consent to put on widow's weeds, but after a time she adopted a suit of grey, during her period of waiting for that "Hope deferred," which "makes



the heart grow sick." Thus it came to pass that, fourteen years after the tragedy, we children called her "The Lady in Grey."

Whenever the church doors were open, week-days or Sundays, the

old-fashioned chariot, with the slow, fat horses, came rumbling up to the parish church, and the tall footman jumped down and opened the door, and Miss Bush, with her thin nose and sprightly air, stepped out, and turned round to assist the trembling steps of her venerable mother, whilst the graceful figure clothed in grey quietly followed like a shadow. Ever since the Squire's death, the Park pew, beneath which was the family vault, had been hung with black. Tablets, and escutcheons of different county families adorned, and considerably enlivened, the white-washed walls of the ancient edifice; and an enormous frame containing the royal arms, with the fiercest of lions and unicorns, the delight of our youthful hearts, hung over the chancel arch. The outside of the church was grey, venerable, and not unpleasing; the inside was hideous and neglected, and overgrown with galleries. It dated back as far as the reign of King John, and an old sun-dial stood amongst the graves. Standing boldly on a hill, the dumpy tower was a landmark for many a mile, and looked down protectingly upon the snug village at its feet. I like to think that though the old church has been pulled down, and a new one built at no great distance from the old site, the quaint tower still stands with its clock, and chimes just the same as in the days of my childhood.

My father was a colonel in the army, retired on account of ill health, and we lived in Greenwood village, at a place called "The Home," queer, yet comfortable, with a large room at one end, which was devoted to the children, and called the play-room. The river ran at the foot of the garden; and the large boat, fitted for either sailing or rowing, and with such a broad keel that she could not easily upset, was one of the chief delights of our life. I often think that no children had such a variety of amusements as we had; and whilst trusted to a greater extent than most, I do not think we often abused the confidence of our parents. At the same time, I have one or two painful memories, connected with my childhood; blots on the white page, which no knife can cut out, nor india-rubber efface. O children, remember that a fault of to-day, the action of a moment, remains a grief for ever—a standing stain, which, if you do forget for a while, will be brought back to you at the end.

The white shell, in spite of its purity, is a black memory to me; and I am going to tell you how that was.

Miss Bush, with all her activity in the parish, found time to culti-

vate her artistic tastes; she was fond of drawing, and taking likenesses in coloured chalks: sometimes she was very happy in her portraits of old women and village children. Encouraged by her success, she undertook a group of the Waters family, including three of my brothers, and one sister. My mother was pleased with the result, and when Miss Bush asked if I might spend the day at the Park, and sit for my picture, she gladly consented; and I was pleased, though considerably awed, at the thought of entering the inside of a house which I had always regarded with romantic interest.

Now that I am a middle-aged lady, perhaps I may be allowed to say, without vanity, that I was a pretty child, with violet eyes brimming over with laughter, long auburn curls, and such round red cheeks that earned me the name of "Brick."

It was a fine summer day, and directly after breakfast, my father, who was always at the beck and call of the young ones, carried me off, to the envy of the others who were entering the school-room. We did not take the white, dusty road, and carriage-drive, which was a public thoroughfare through the Park, but down my darling lane, across the brook, and into the cool, dark wood: my heart was beating with pleasure, the holiday alone was a treat; and I remember looking wistfully at some capering lambs, and murmuring, "Happy little creatures, to have no lessons to learn!" It was not till later in life that the desire for knowledge sprang up, and books were loved and toiled at, and former idleness lamented.

My father rang at the hall door, and when the tall footman appeared, I hung on to his hand rather tightly before I would let him go, and follow the imposing man, who led me through a dark hall, with a terribly slippery floor of polished oak, and a small room with antique, carved furniture, into the drawing-room, which was large and light, with one long window to the ground, and one on each side with deep, cushioned sills, in one of which sat the lady in grey. Miss Bush rose to receive me; she was sitting in front of a small table, where her drawing materials were carefully arranged.

"My dear, you have come in very good time, but I am all ready, you see. Mamma, this is Adelaide Waters."

The old lady looked up from her newspaper, and gave me two fingers to shake; it was her custom, she never gave more to her oldest friends.

"Come to have your picture taken," she quavered: though neither deaf nor blind, old age asserted itself in her step and voice. "I hope you will not get tired, my dear."

I looked towards the lady in grey, but, to my relief, no introduction was attempted, and she never even raised her eyes from the work which occupied her.

"Sit here," said Miss Bush, and she took off my hat, and rumpled my hair, "to look careless, you know," and arranged my attitude. She looked at me curiously, pursing up her mouth, with her head on one side.

"The pose is everything, my dear; the success of the picture depends upon that."

I am sure, after thinking all was settled, she jumped up six times to make some alteration. The line of hair was too rigid; a finger was distorted; the expression was spasmodic.

"There, that's capital!" she cried triumphantly at last: "sit perfectly still, but talk, my dear; yes, talk, or your face will grow stiff and stony. Repeat that little poem you wrote; you see, I have heard about it."

I blushed more like a brick than ever: yes, I was a poetess; but how could my mother betray me? As long as the world goes round, I suppose mothers will be foolishly proud of their children, and think that their geese are swans. After a great deal of hesitation, and saying it was only rubbish, I repeated my first original composition, inspired by reading the story of Renard the Fox, a pretty book given to me by our kind vicar. At the first outset of our archery, he encouraged our efforts by offering three prizes to those who scored the most in one afternoon. My brother Dick put in three arrows, and won the first prize; my sister Rhoda got an outer white, and carried off the second; whilst I managed to plant an arrow in the broad wooden leg of the target stand, which remarkable feat entitled me to the third prize, as the others were simply nowhere. I laugh now to think of our childish efforts, especially when I remember our first target, an old hamper with the lid upraised, and a large apple stuck in the centre for the bull's-eye, and which I was fortunate enough to hit and bring down with a crash, imagining myself, from that moment, to be a second William Tell. But by dint of perseverance, some of us succeeded in becoming excellent shots, and winners of

public prizes. But to return to my little poem—the first verse ran as follows :

“ Old Renard the fox, both wary and wise,
Thou dost not care for thy poor victim's cries ;
The cock and the hen fly away at thy sight,
And the birds of the air all take to flight.”

I am not going to inflict all the other verses upon my readers, for the very good reason that I have quite forgotten them, the original manuscript having been burnt with other valuable documents, at the age of fourteen, when I began to be ashamed of my childish productions.

“ Wonderful !” said Miss Bush, dreamily, when I had got through my ten verses ; her whole thoughts, I could see, were given to her drawing ; “ you are a young genius—that line is too curved—I should not wonder if you were a second Mrs. Hemans.”

She kept looking at me with eagle glances, then buried her nose in the paper ; it seemed to grow so red with its rapid journeys up and down, that I found myself wondering whether she would colour the cheeks with its rosy tip, instead of the carmine chalk. Too much taken up with her work to do more than jerk out a few disconnected words and remarks, my eyes and thoughts were free to go where they would. I found myself sitting in full view of the lady in grey. How beautiful she was ! time and grief had stolen the bloom, but not the lovely outlines. My intense love of the beautiful was satisfied in looking at her ; besides, her occupation was interesting. A good-sized piece of queer knitting lay on the floor at her feet, a large ball was in her lap, and from fragments of many-coloured woollen materials beside her she cut narrow strips, about a quarter of a yard in length ; these she pieced together, carefully arranging the colours in succession, and winding up the ball, which quickly increased in size. After awhile she began turning over the scraps, as if in search of something.

“ Dear, dear !” she sighed discontentedly, “ no more pink.”

That was it, the pink stuff had come to an end : poor lady, I was sorry for her vexation ; and I began, in imagination, to ransack my boxes of treasures. Surely I had made my doll a pink flannel cloak, and there was a piece left over. The lady sighed heavily, and looked out of the window.

“ It will never be finished in time,” she muttered.

"Never mind," I ventured to say timidly; "I have got some at home, and you shall have it."

"What are you saying?" inquired Miss Bush, but she forgot to wait for an answer; and the lady in grey turned round, and looked at me for the first time. She made no remark, and my eyes sank before hers. When I looked again, she had taken up her large ivory pins, and was knitting her many-coloured ball into a strip about ten inches wide. I learned afterwards that many long strips were sewn together, till the whole was large enough for a bed quilt; and a very handsome piece of work was effected by the use of scraps, and odds and ends, that would otherwise have been wasted. I was a patient sitter, and the interest I took in the progress of the lady's knitting helped to pass away the time.

"It is quite cruel to keep that child any longer," said Mrs. Bush, as the clock chimed twelve; "do let her go, Charlotte, and have a run in the garden."

"Yes, yes, in one minute."

Miss Bush kept sweeping her eyes across me and the picture, and after a touch here and there, she said I might go, and she could finish the rest at her leisure. I was allowed to take a look at the likeness, and it struck me as being myself with all the life and fire and fun washed, starched, and ironed out of me.

In a few minutes I was in the garden, prying into the arbours and dark corners, and planning games of hide and seek. It was all very beautiful, gay, and well-kept; and the picturesque boat-house was my special envy, though the boat within was old and rotten, as none of them cared to go upon the river.

Miss Bush joined me shortly in her garden "ugly," for hats were not in fashion then, and led me into the kitchen garden, surrounded with high walls, and clothed with abundance of fruit trees. An old man was looking at the strawberry beds, to which I also felt strongly drawn.

"They have done well this year, Ben," said Miss Bush.

"Yes, miss, and so they ought, for the power of pains I've took with them. Little miss will find these better nor those, though, bless yer, all go down with children."

Miss Bush laughed, saying, "I daresay she will not be quarrelling with any of them; but you had better take those, Adelaide, that Ben recommends; you deserve the best for sitting so patiently."

Old Ben trotted off to his dinner, and I was left to revel in that child's paradise, a bountiful bed of strawberries.

"He must be very old," I remarked, when the first edge of my appetite was taken off; "too old to do any work."

"Yes, it is more looking on, than doing, now; but, my dear, we do not throw off an old servant like an old garment, when worn-out and useless. Ben's home is here till he finds one in another world. He was but a lad when he came first to weed the garden, and many a time he has wheeled us children round these gravel walks."

I scarcely knew which was the oddest—to think of Ben, as a lad, or Miss Bush, as a child in a wheelbarrow. What a gulf lay between me and them! Could I ever be as old as they?

After full justice done to the strawberries, Miss Bush took me over the house, at least the inhabited part, for one old wing was entirely deserted, and given up to the rats, who held high court and revel there. Last of all we ascended the roof, up a steep staircase, and through a trap-door. A flat space ran round the edge, protected by a stone balustrade. There was no view, as the country was flat; but the river looked pretty, glistening in the sunshine, like a piece of white satin ribbon unrolled along the green park; and how superior I felt as I looked towards the clump of chestnuts, where we children played, to think that I was standing familiarly upon the very roof that had inspired us with awe in its distant grandeur! Alas! it has well been said, "Pride goes before a fall."

During dinner I felt so much afraid of the tall footman, that I was not able to make a hearty meal. I fancied that his eye was always upon me, and that he was waiting to pounce upon my plate, almost before I had finished. This last idea forced me to swallow down my food so rapidly that I narrowly escaped a choking fit; and Miss Bush quietly hinted that there was no need to hurry. The lady in grey sat opposite me, silent and drooping; but Miss Bush, with her pleasant village gossip, kept the conversation going, enlivening the old lady, whose life she must have gladdened, with her perpetual cheerfulness and untiring good-humour.

On our return to the drawing-room, she made me sit for half an hour, whilst she touched up the picture; then taking me to a cupboard, with the door fitted cunningly into the wall, she opened it, saying I might amuse myself with anything I found, whilst she

was writing some letters. Such quaint odds and ends I found in that cupboard; relics of a generation that had long grown out of childhood—playthings, puzzles, and animals that were surely antediluvian, from their eccentric shape. One old doll took my fancy most; she had a blunt nose, as if time had driven hard against it; a yellow complexion, from which the roses had long since fled; eyes that opened and shut with a creaky spring, and fine soft hair that had gone grey with age: the clothes were cut in a bygone fashion, and there was something in their musty smell that made me think she had been buried, and dug up again. I wove all kinds of tales round dolly's hoary head, whilst Miss Bush's pen was scratching over the paper, and Mrs. Bush nodded in her chair, and the lady in grey sat in the window, looking for one who never came. The door opened softly, and the tall footman, looking sideways at his sleeping mistress, went up to Miss Bush.

"Sorry to trouble you—old Molly—the lodge—spasms—like some more drops."

Such whispered words fell upon my ear; Miss Bush rose up quickly.

"O, certainly, come at once. Adelaide, I must leave you for a little while: here, amuse yourself with this cabinet, it is full of beautiful shells."

She opened the doors of a curious Japanese cabinet, standing on an oak table in the corner, and said I might open all the drawers; she hurried out of the room, and I was left alone with the old lady sleeping in her chair, and the lady in grey absorbed in her work.

The cabinet was a curiosity; it was made of tiny squares of wood fitted closely together, and the hinges and handles were a dark red colour; inside the doors were funny little devices, stuck about without any design or regularity. There was one long drawer at the bottom, containing a sweet little bird's-nest fitted into the branch of a tree, broken off by Captain Bush in the Mauritius; the backbone of a saw-fish, with the sharp notches sticking out on either side; the jaw of a young shark, with its baby teeth; the scimitar of an Indian prince, in a red velvet scabbard; and a heap of Job's tears, a kind of small round, grey bean, piled over the skeleton of a sea-horse—such a tiny thing, with a long nose, and curled-up tail. Above were six small drawers full of lovely shells, laid on cotton wool. I took up one after another, rubbed their bright polished surface, and held them to my ear, delighted with the soft murmuring sound, like an echo of the falling

waves on the shores of the hot coast of their native Africa. We had no shells at home, and a longing came over me to take one of these prizes away; to carry it always in my pocket, to bring it out in my solitudes, and listen to the tales it could tell me of the deep. That, I say, became my desire—my temptation. There was one little, plain, white shell, with a dark brown inside, that took my fancy; in shape it was something like an egg. Who would miss it amongst so many? and what a treasure it would be to me! Time passed, I do not know how quickly, and Miss Bush never returned. Old Molly must have been very bad.

The door opened quietly, as before, but this time Mrs. Bush wakened up from her lengthy slumbers. Seeing that his mistress was already disturbed, the tall footman said in a loud voice, "Miss Mound is waiting at the door for Miss Adelaide Waters; she refuses to come in, and hopes that Miss Adelaide will not keep her waiting."

The white shell was in my hand, and all the drawers were shut. The footman's eye was upon me; if he would only go, I thought, I would put it back; but, no, he was waiting to conduct me out, and my guilty conscience led me to think that he would know I had taken it out with the intention of keeping it, and perhaps suspect me of having more in my pocket. I became flurried, slipped it into my pocket, and ran to Mrs. Bush, saying, "Good-bye, I must go now, please."

She gave me two fingers as before, said she hoped I had been happy, and asked Thomas where Miss Bush had gone. I looked towards the lady in grey; she held out her hand silently. Pleased at her notice, I ran to her eagerly, and clasping her white fingers round mine, she said very earnestly, "You will come to-morrow, and bring them both."

"Yes," I replied vaguely, not knowing what she meant, nor daring to ask.

My brothers and sisters, who had accompanied Miss Mound, were eager to hear the history of the day, but I am afraid I gave very unsatisfactory answers to their questions, and they voted me stupid, or proud. "Stuck up," said Dick, "with dining at the Park." "Or frightened," said Alma, "at the lady in grey."

The fact was, my small mind was oppressed by two things—the shell in my pocket, which was about the heaviest weight I had ever carried, and the parting words of the lady in grey.

"Be sure you bring them both."

What could she mean? On consideration, I determined that it was evident she had taken in the offer I had made of the pink flannel; that was one thing; but the other—could it possibly be the white shell? could she have seen me slip it into my pocket? I turned cold at the thought of detection, and then I remembered another eye that had surely watched me; and if I could have undone the work of that fatal moment, when the footman stood at the door, I should have been the happiest little girl in England.

On reaching home I amused myself with the shell at odd moments; stopping half-way on the stairs, lingering at the school-room door. I polished it with the corner of my apron, I held it to my ear; but, alas! it did not give me the pleasure I had expected; nor could I agree with the old saying, that "Stolen waters are sweet," either then, or at any other period of my life. The only song it seemed to sing was the sighing repetition of these words: "Give me back, give me back, give me back."

My uncle Christopher had arrived a few days before this, after a long absence at sea; he was a naval officer, and a friend of Captain Bush, son of the old lady at the Park. That evening, to our great delight, he brought down a box of curiosities, collected by himself during his travels. There were feather fans from China, and little hideous animals with heads on springs, that moved from side to side with every breath of wind; and there were curious bits of dry chips, from Japan, which, when thrown into water, unrolled, and expanded into flowers, jugs, tools, hats, and every description of thing. Last of all came a box of shells, carefully packed in cotton wool; these my uncle spread upon the table, saying he had picked them up himself, on the coast of Africa; and, as he brought them out, he gave us the name and history of each. They were all in pairs, which seemed to be the great thing to accomplish.

"We often exchanged shells amongst each other," said Uncle Christopher, "so as to get a good pair; but there is one here that beat me altogether; it is so scarce that a fellow could not be found by any one in the ship."

He laid down a white shell upon the table, and, to my horror, it was the exact shape and size of the one in my pocket. What had I done? Stolen the rarest shell in the old lady's collection, Dumb with shame and misery, I heard Dick ask the name of this solitary shell.

"You will notice its resemblance to an egg," said Uncle Christopher, "and it commonly goes by the name of the egg shell."

My mother was sitting by, and, looking attentively at the shell, she exclaimed,

"Why, Christopher, Mrs. Bush has got one exactly like it."

"Really," replied my uncle with interest; "then George Bush must have picked one up, or else Sitwell."

The latter was the husband of the lady in grey.

"I think Mrs. Bush would like to see these shells," said my mother.

"I will take them to her with great pleasure," replied my uncle, "and let her choose any she fancies, except the egg shell, which is already promised."

I crept into bed that night like a guilty criminal, with a burden on my mind which I felt could only be removed by the restoration of the shell. I fell into a troubled sleep, dreaming that the lady in grey was knitting all my frocks, and the bed clothes, into her counterpane: whilst I was chasing a phantom white shell round the roof of the house, which slipped between my fingers every time I caught hold of it.

The next day was Saturday, and I determined to spend my half-holiday in a private and secret expedition to Greenwood Park. My brother and sisters were bent on a game at round-the-house, which was played in this way—one hiding behind corners and bushes, and lying in wait to catch one of the others, as they cautiously advanced. I played for a few minutes, and managed to slip off unnoticed. I flew up the broad walk, opened the garden gate, ran down the field and across the high road, and dived into the quiet green lane, down which I walked more soberly, holding the shell in my hand, and occasionally putting it to my ear. The fir-wood and the shell each sang its own song, and both seemed like echoes of the falling waves.

I reached the knoll of ground on which the chestnuts stood; and, looking across the Park, I saw a pony carriage driving towards the house. Two people were inside; it was my mother, driven by Uncle Christopher. There was no mistake about it, and I sat down in despair. Could anything be more unfortunate? They were taking the shells to Mrs. Bush, according to my mother's suggestion; and the loss of the egg shell would be discovered, before I had had time to restore it.

I knew that I ought to go straight on, and publicly give back what

I had secretly taken ; but I had not the courage. Please to remember, as I said before, that I was only eight years old. I sat and swung myself on one of our favourite drooping boughs, and with vivid imagination went through the scene that I fancied was taking place.

Mrs. Bush discovers the loss of the shell : "Dear me, dear me," says the quivering voice, "what has become of it? Charlotte, where is that white shell?" More searching, the bell is rung, and the tall footman enters with solemn face. Thomas is questioned: Thomas knows nothing; no one has been to the cabinet since Miss Adelaide Waters was there yesterday. Stop—now he thinks of it, he *did* see her slip something white into her pocket. Public disgrace, general outcry; and I wandered off into visions of policeman, handcuffs, and prison.

I afterwards heard from my mother, for you may be sure we talked the affair over together, that something like this had really happened; only Miss Bush was absent, and the footman knew nothing, and did not even mention my name. In the midst of the search, a voice from the window said, "It is sure to come back;" but no one paid much attention to this oracular speech of the lady in grey, and they thought she was speaking of her lost husband.

About an hour passed, I should think, before my mother and uncle drove away from the Park; and when the carriage was out of sight, I rose with trembling steps, and hurried to the house. A portion of the flower-garden at the side of the house could be seen from the front; and fancying that I saw Miss Bush in her "ugly," I opened the wire gate, thinking how much easier it would be to give the shell, and make my confession to her, instead of to Mrs. Bush. But as I advanced into the garden, I found that it was not Miss Bush's "ugly," but the poke bonnet of an old weeding woman, that I had seen.

Turning my eyes timidly towards the drawing-room windows, I saw the lady in grey; she beckoned to me, as she stood in the long window, which opened down to the ground.

"You have come," she said simply; "I have been looking for you," and taking my hand she drew me into the room; no one was there but ourselves.

"Have you brought them both?"

"Yes," I replied, feeling no doubt now as to what she meant; and, laying the shell on the table, I whispered that I was very sorry I had taken it.

She took it up, and pressed it to her lips. "*He* brought it," she said softly, "and I knew it would come back, as he will, some day."

At this moment Mrs. Bush came into the room; her eye fell at once upon the white shell; but she did not seem to notice me, as I stood half behind her daughter.

"Why, there is the shell!" cried the old lady, and with some querulousness, she added, "You might have told me, Maria, that you had it; no one wanted to take it from you; and it would have saved a world of fuss and bother."

Miss Bush came in whilst her mother was speaking; looking from one to the other, she said soothingly, "Never mind, mother, the shell is found, and that is all right."

"If you please, Mrs. Bush," I said, coming forwards and blushing painfully, "I took the shell yesterday, and I have only just brought it back."

"Adelaide Waters!" exclaimed Mrs. Bush, amazed at my sudden appearance, and confession, "you—took—the—shell?"

"I am very sorry," I stammered, dreadfully frightened at her slow way of speaking; "but—but—we had none at home, and it made such nice music"—Here I broke down and began to cry.

The lady in grey took my hand. "You are not to scold her," she said decisively; "she has brought it back. I told you it would come."

Mrs. and Miss Bush looked at each other in surprise; an unexpected championess had risen up for me.

"Maria is quite right," said Miss Bush, with energy. "Adelaide, my dear, it was naughty of you to take the shell; but I know you feel that, or you would not have brought it back; and I am pleased that you had the courage to do what was right. Now stop crying this minute; you will make yourself hot, and do no good."

There was a decision, as well as a kindness, about Miss Bush, that always enforced obedience; and I dried my tears at once.

"Your mamma was here a short time ago," she continued; "she left just before I came in; I suppose she does not know that you took the shell."

I replied that she did not, and showing a second inclination to tears, Miss Bush kindly said she would walk home with me, and make peace with my mother.

Before we left, I turned to my new friend, the lady in grey, and put a small bundle into her hand of pink and other coloured flannels.

"Will you put that into your knitting, please," I said, with great shyness, "and I will bring you some more by-and-by, if you like."

The lady's eyes glistened with pleasure; she thanked me, and said it was just what she wanted.

"Bless the child!" said Miss Bush, pleased at my attention to her sister, "you and Maria will be great friends, now."

On our way to the village, Miss Bush told me many pleasant stories, and just as we reached our gate, she paused, saying, "One word, dear, about the shell; you will be glad all your life that you brought it back of your own accord; it will help to soften a painful memory; and I feel sure that your keen sense of right will keep you from going very far wrong in life. Never deaden conscience, my child; by refusing to obey it; a victory won is worth a few wounds."

"Mrs. Waters," she said kindly, as we entered the drawing-room where my mother was sitting, "I have come to tell you that we have found the lost shell; your little daughter brought it back this afternoon; telling us, in a handsome manner, she was very sorry she had taken it; and you must please say nothing about it."

Surprise was painted on my mother's face as she looked at us both. "After your kindness in coming to intercede for Adelaide," she replied, "I can refuse you nothing, dear Miss Bush; if my little girl has done wrong, I feel thankful she has done what she could to repair her fault."

"There, that is all I came for, to put things straight. Good-bye, Mrs. Waters, you need not fear for your girl. Good-bye, Adelaide, and do not forget my sister's knitting;" and, refusing all invitations to tea, Miss Bush returned home, having discharged her kind errand.

I think my mother must have said a word to Miss Mound, and my brothers and sisters, for not a question was asked during tea about my private expedition and long absence from home. I know that I sat very silent, eating my bread and butter with diligence, and listening to the talk of the others.

In a quiet hour I opened my heart to my mother, who always encouraged, and never frightened away, the confidence of her children, and told her exactly how it happened.

"If that tall footman had not stood staring at me," I said, "I am sure I should have put it back; and I never dreamt I was taking one of the most valuable of the shells."

"Be thankful, Adelaide," replied my mother, "that it was a

valuable shell, or your conscience might never have roused you sufficiently to force you to make the exertion to take it back; whilst the sin of stealing, for I will not soften the word, would have remained the same. Also, my child, let this be a lesson not to dally with temptation: had you left the cabinet when the desire for the shell took hold of you, this trouble would never have come upon you."

A few more words, and I have done with the story of the white shell. Mrs. Sitwell, or the lady in grey, had taken a fancy to her little friend, and she often asked for me to come to the Park; and they were pleased to gratify the first wish she had ever expressed for any one's society since her sad loss. She liked me to help her prepare the balls for her knitting; whilst I took the greatest pleasure in hunting up from our own stores, and those of our friends, every scrap of stuff that could be of use to her.

"We are getting on so fast," she said with glee, "it is sure to be finished. When he comes I shall have no time for work. Which way is the wind?"

That was the question she always asked; an east wind made her sigh, but the west wind brought smiles to her face. You see, sailing vessels, and not steamers, were the fashion in those days.

I fancy that she told more of her sweet, gentle thoughts to me than to others. There was no fear of a child mocking her, or looking incredulous; and except for that one rooted idea that her husband was alive, and would shortly return, and the deep melancholy her grief had thrown over her, I could see in her mind nothing different from others; and I loved and admired her, with all the force of an affectionate disposition, very much given to hero worship.

Well, this waiting was not to last much longer; the poor lady caught cold, which an early and severe winter settled on her chest. She gradually lost strength, till the time came that I used to sit in her room, finishing the knitting she was no longer able to hold.

It was New Year's Eve, the day she fancied her husband would return, because he left her then. A contrary wind disturbed her greatly now, and Mrs. Bush, to avoid giving pain, always said it was in the west; but I do not think the lady in grey believed her, and she looked to me for true information.

Mrs. Bush stopped me that morning, as I came to see the patient, suffering lady; my cheeks tingling with the cold north-easter, that swept across the park.

"Say the wind is west, my dear ; she's very bad to-day."

I shook my head, saying, "I can't help it, Mrs. Bush ; she depends on my word, and I *must* tell her the truth."

That New Year's Eve she passed away, just as dusk came on. She always said that *he* would come before the old year was gone, and so he did.

They told me that she rose from her pillow with a loud, joyful cry of "Henry !" and fell back with the sweetest smile upon her face that had been there since her bridal day.

My friend was gone, but I loved to think of her in her new-found happiness ; and I often wondered whether now she thought of me, or looked down upon the earth, peeping through the stars, which some one says are holes pierced in the floor of heaven, to give us glimpses of the glory there, and beckon us above.

Mrs. and Miss Bush were always glad to see me at the Park. Another portrait was completed, framed, and presented to my mother, who was charmed with the gift. I began to discover that I had a great taste for drawing myself ; not the rigid uninteresting copies that Miss Mound set before us, such as gates, windows, and gables, not a line of which I could ever get straight, but for such drawing as Miss Bush was fond of—making groups upon the table of baskets, vases, shells, pie-dishes, jugs, etc. Sketching from still life it is called ; and, as Miss Bush took a pleasure in teaching me, I soon made rapid advances in my new study. I also aimed at higher art, and was constantly drawing the profiles of every face in the house : some were like, and some were not, though I could always trace a resemblance myself, and expected others to do so too.

I once took my father when he was napping in the evening, but he pinched my ear when I showed him the drawing, and said I had taken a mean advantage of him, when he was not able to put on his best expression.

Not long after the death of the lady in grey, Mrs. Bush placed in my hand the white shell, that I had taken and restored.

"Keep it, my dear," she said ; "it was picked up by *her* husband, and you will like to have as a keepsake what was the cause and beginning of your friendship with her."

I was pleased at the old lady's gift, and thus the white shell became my very own ; and it still reminds me of that old, red house, and its inhabitants—a pleasant and a sorrowful remembrance combined.

LADY BLANCHE'S DREAM.



HY is my Lady Blanche so sad?
 Sure she's enough to make her glad,
 And give her happiness.

Yet sits she cross and pouting there,
 Reclining in the softest chair,
 While ever and anon she sighs,
 And turns to cast her scornful eyes
 On such a lovely dress!

Then up she starts and rings the bell,
 So that its angry tones may tell

“My lady is put out.”

And when appears her trembling maid,
 She points to where the dress is laid;—
 “How could you bring me such a fright?
 I can't wear this to-morrow night;
 What have you been about?”

The maid does not attempt to speak;
 Obediently, with manner meek,

She takes the dress away.

Blanche in her chair luxurious lies,
 And meditates with soft surprise,—
 “How stupid are the servants all,
 To bring for the next children's ball
 A dress like yesterday!”

While thus she muses on her frock,
 She hears a loud, imperious knock

Outside the fast-closed door;
 And scarcely waiting her commands,
 There enters, and before her stands,
 A woman shrunk in every limb,
 A gaunt intruder, old and grim,
 Pale, desolate, and poor.

Poor Blanche is horrorstruck, and tries
To ring the bell that by her lies,

But finds, to her dismay,
She has no power to move or speak;
And terror pales her healthy cheek
As the gaunt vision on her lays
A bony, trembling hand, and says—
“Come, walk with me to-day!”

She leads her from her easy chair
Out in the cold and frosty air,

Into the busy street.
“My name is Want,” she whispers low,
“And you and I to-day will go
To see my children in this town;
Full many wander up and down,
Which we are sure to meet.”

Before a baker's shop they stood,
Where heaps of hot and tempting food
Were in the window laid.

Blanche oft had tasted of the store,
But never had observed before
The rows of little hungry ones,
Devouring with their eyes the buns
Thus temptingly displayed.

“These are my children,” said her guide;
“They must remain unsatisfied,
With bread before their eyes.

And while with famine they are thin,
They see rich ladies enter in,
Without a thought of them, to buy
An over-plentiful supply
Of dainty luxuries.”

Then passed she from the busy street,
And led with swift, unwavering feet,
Into a city lane.

Squalid and low the houses were,
Changed was the very atmosphere;
’Twas such a wretched, dirty place,
Blanche turned to cover up her face
With a low cry of pain.

"'Tis here," cried Want, "my children live;
Famine and crime together thrive;

Those who won't beg must steal.
Look here!" with sudden wrath she said,
And taking Blanche's hand, she led
To the low casement of a room,
Where, peering through the dusty gloom,
They saw a mother kneel.

Six starving children stood around,
Or lay upon the cold, hard ground;
No bed there was, nor chair;
Their bones were coming through their skin,
They were so naked and so thin.
Blanche shuddered at the ghastly scene,
She longed to ask what could it mean,
And why such want was there.

"See," said her guide, "this dire distress;
And yet you grumbled at a dress,
Half of whose cost would pay
This woman's rent, or buy her food
For all these children, pure and good;
Quelling, besides, the bitter grief
In which, for succour and relief,
To God we see her pray."

Then, full of shame, Blanche bowed her head,
And following where her guide next led,
Went humbly on her way:
She marked the wretchedness around,
Then cast her eyes upon the ground,
Nor dared upon those scenes to look,
Lest she should meet the dumb rebuke
That in such misery lay.

Her dismal guide soon paused once more,
This time before an iron door,

Whereat they entered in.
"Here," whispered Want, "I'm sure to find
More children than we've left behind;
'Tis the abode of Want unchecked,
The thousand victims of neglect—
It is the house of Sin!"

"A prison!" then cried Blanche. "Have I
Made thieves and murderers? Oh why
Have you now led me here?"
"Listen!" said Want. "How oft have you



Thought over all that you might do
To teach the ragged boy to be
Honest through all his poverty—
God's laws and man's to fear?

“Ah, Lady Blanche, so rich and gay,
 You idle through the sunnier day,
 Wasting your precious time;
 Nor think you how the hungry call
 For you to help them ere they fall:
 The naked look to you for dress,
 Yours is the power to soothe distress,
 And blunt the edge of crime.”

Blanche slowly saw her guide depart,
 Then, with a little trembling start,
 Awoke she from her swoon.
 It plunged her deep in pensive thought
 Of all the duties newly taught.
 And much I hope her aged guide
 Did not walk vainly by her side
 That dreamy afternoon.

E. M. L.



THE CAZY OF JOUNPORE.

AN INDIAN STORY.



BEFORE I begin my story, it may perhaps be better to give my readers the meaning of the Hindoostani names of which I have made use. Cazy signifies judge; Meánjie is a form of address, always used to schoolmasters: the nearest translation would be Sir, as we have no word exactly answering to it. This is a very well-known story in India, and is supposed, by the natives, to have happened about two hundred years ago. The word Dhoby means washerman; there are no *washerwomen* in India; and each man has a donkey to carry home the clothes.

Once upon a time, there was an old Dhoby and his wife, who were very rich, but had no children; this was a great grief to them. One day, the old Dhoby, whose name was Beharree, was riding home with the clothes he had washed. As he passed the school, the windows being open, he heard the master, who was very angry with one of the boys, say, "Oh, you stupid! I could make a man out of a donkey sooner than out of you."

"Dear me," thought Beharree to himself, "what a remarkably clever man that schoolmaster is! I wonder whether he could make a man out of my donkey?—that would do almost as well as having a son."

So he rode on very thoughtfully, and when he reached home, he said to his wife,

"Do you know, I heard the Meánjie say that he could make a man out of a donkey?"

"What a capital thing!" answered his wife; "you had better take our donkey, and see if he can turn him into a man."

So directly the school was over, the Dhoby, his wife, and the donkey presented themselves at the master's house.

"The Meánjie will excuse me," said Beharree, "but I heard you say, as I passed in the road, that you could make a man out of a donkey—could you make one of mine?"

The schoolmaster was at first inclined to think that Beharree was mad, but then, seeing what a simple fellow he was, he thought he would take advantage of him.

"Quite easily," the master answered, "only you must leave your donkey here for exactly a year; remember, exactly a year."

Delighted with this answer, Beharree was preparing to take his departure: "Stop," cried the schoolmaster, "I can't do it for nothing; it will give me a great deal of trouble."

The Dhoby looked a shade less delighted at this. "How much do you want?" asked he.

"That depends upon the donkey," the other answered; "let me see the animal."

The washerman then led him outside to where the donkey was tied up.

"Oh!" said the master, looking very wise, "he'll be a very difficult animal to change into a man, because of his legs; I could not do him under three hundred rupees."

"That is a great deal of money, Meânjie."

"Ah, yes; but then your donkey has *such* legs."

The Dhoby turned round to his wife. "Can we give that?"

"What is the use of money to us who have no children?" she answered: "we are rich."

"Very well," said Beharree. So, giving the schoolmaster the three hundred rupees, they returned home.

The year passed very slowly to the washerman and his wife; at last eleven months were gone, and they looked forward, with delight, to the time when they could go to the school. Unfortunately, however, just before the appointed day, Beharree caught a fever, and was not able to go out for some time. When, at last, he was able to walk, he went directly to the school.

"Meânjie," said he, "I have come to take my son home; I have been ill, and so could not come sooner."

"You are too late," answered the schoolmaster, shaking his head; "you ought to have come when I told you. Why, your donkey turned into a man three months ago, and has now gone to be the Cazy of Jounpore."

In reality, he had sold poor Beharree's donkey. The Dhoby was very disappointed.

"Then I shall never see him," he said.

"Why? can't you go there?" asked the master.

"Ah, yes; but then he is the Cazy now, he won't know me," answered poor Beharree, in a dejected tone.

"You must take his halter and pail; he will be sure to remember them."

This was quite a new idea, and the Dhoby's face brightened up with hope. "Thanks, Meánjie, so I will," and he went home. All that day they were busy with their preparations, and the next morning he and his wife set out for Jounpore: they took with them all the harness, the halter, and the pail that had belonged to their old donkey. After several days' journey, they reached Jounpore, and went directly to where the Cazy was administering justice. There was an immense crowd assembled, and Beharree and his wife stood in the background, holding up, first the halter, and then the pail, to attract the attention of the judge.

At last the Cazy, happening to look in that direction, saw the Dhoby making grimaces, and shaking the halter at him. Naturally very much surprised at these proceedings, the judge called an officer, and said to him, "Go and see what that man wants."

So the officer went, and told Beharree to come forward.

"What is it that you want?" asked the judge.

"I think it would be better to speak to you in private, sir," answered the Dhoby.

"No, whatever you say must be said in court."

"Don't you know me?" asked Beharree. "What! have you forgotten *me*, your old master?" He was becoming rather indignant at not being able to trace any sign of recognition on the Cazy's face.

"My good man," the judge answered, "I never remember to have seen you before."

"Oh, you ungrateful beast!" The Dhoby was really angry now. "The years that you have carried me about the country on your back! and I have been so kind to you, have fed you, and taken care of you, and now you don't know me!"

The Cazy was so stupefied with astonishment, that he could say nothing, but sat staring stupidly at Beharree, who continued,

"If you don't know *me*, you can't have forgotten your pail—*your own pail*—and saddle and reins," he added, holding up each separate article as he spoke before the bewildered judge.

"Come, as you pretend to have forgotten everything, I will tell you. You know as well as I do that you are my donkey—that I took you to the schoolmaster, and paid him three hundred rupees to make a man of you. Oh, you thankless brute, *you* know all that quite well! *You* know that you turned into a man three months ago, and were so ungrateful as to come here to be the Cazy directly, without ever thinking of your

poor old master. Ah! but now you are coming home with me, to help with the washing."

Poor old Beharree had worked himself to such a pitch of indignation, towards the close of his speech, that he presented a most laughable spectacle.

He was standing in the middle of the court, holding the saddle and pail of his old donkey, and shaking them at the Cazy. Had he been amongst Europeans, there would undoubtedly have been a roar of laughter at his expense; but he was in India, and the natives of India never laugh.

To illustrate what I say by an anecdote—a native was paying his homage to a Rajah. The Rajah was seated on his chair of state, and a little way in front of him was a fountain. The native was, I suppose, not aware of this, for, walking backwards from the throne, he went too far, and fell, head over heels, into the fountain. The English who were present naturally began to laugh at such an absurd sight, but the natives (and I was told by a gentleman who was himself there), not one of them so much as smiled. They consider it the height of ill-breeding to laugh, or sneeze, or cough, when any one of a superior rank to themselves is present. They are very ceremonious, and look upon all Europeans as perfect barbarians in their manners.

But to return to our story.

The Cazy at length made poor Beharree understand that he was mistaken, and had had a trick played upon him, and, after giving him a large sum of money, sent him away.

Full of rage and indignation at having been made such dupes of, the old Dhoby and his wife set out on their homeward journey. After a few days they reached their native village.

"Now, you schoolmaster," said the washerman to himself, "I'll make you give me back my donkey, and the three hundred rupees."


So saying, he walked up to where the schoolmaster used to live; but he was not there, he was nowhere to be found, he had gone, no one knew where.

Poor Beharree, he lost both his donkey and his rupees, and got no son after all, and was, besides, very much ridiculed by his neighbours for being such a simpleton.

In spite of all the efforts of the judge to hush the matter up, the story got abroad, and is now so well known all over India, that it has become quite a proverb, to be like the Cazy of Jounpore.

BURIED WORTHIES.

POETS' CORNER.

1.  HAT poet, to punish the ingratitude of his countrymen, left his home, resolved that his birthplace should never be known?
2. Who caused sundry denunciators of his morals, nevertheless, to admire his wit?
3. What poet fought, as soldiers never could have done, for the recovery of Jerusalem?
4. Who was the celebrated author of a funeral hymn for the bereaved?
5. On whom do we invoke blessings as often as we hear his name?
6. What poet, in an agony of grief, let cherries fall from the tree under which he sat, into his mouth?
7. Who made his pen serve as his bread-winner all the days of his life?
8. What poet was obliged to wear a wooden leg a year or two before his death?
9. What poet got up perhaps too high in public estimation, and fell again proportionately?
10. What great poet, having a bad cold, attributed his chill erroneously to sitting in a draught when warm with his subject?
11. In whose poems do we observe how all error is made to appear truth?
12. Who succeeded in making his cottage home worthy to be visited by the princes of the land?

EADGYTH.

AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.



WILIGHT asks for some information respecting amateur printing machines. Can our readers recommend one suitable for a lady to work? Does a cheap one answer?

"Sunshine" must procure some book on keeping pets, such as: "Beeton's Book of Poultry and Domestic Animals, showing how to Rear and Manage them in Sickness and in Health," price 4s. 6d.

"Agnes S." has illuminated a number of texts, and wishes to sell them for charity. The prices vary from 6d. to 6s. Address—"Agnes S., Post Office, Sutton-Coldfield."

"Berengaria" inquires whether "Harold II. is included among the nine English kings who have met with violent deaths since 1066, including Charles I."

Can any one tell "Ada B." where she

can get "clear, and not very expensive maps of the principal constellations; also geological maps after Lyell's system?"

"Rosebud." You must get a list of tracts published by the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, and will there find the names of a great number of short stories at the price you mention.

"Maud" informs "Alice" that she finds, from vol. i. of "*Cameos of English History*," that Robert Bruce was twice married; first to Joan de Valence, and secondly to Elizabeth, a daughter of the Earl of Ulster. The latter statement is confirmed in Lingard's "*History of England*," vol. ii., p. 305, where it is mentioned that, when Bruce's wife, the daughter of the Earl of Ulster, was informed of her husband's coronation, she ventured to express a hope "that he, who was a king in summer, might not prove an exile in winter. These words were noticed as a prediction, but it required not the spirit of prophecy to foretell the disasters which attended the first efforts of the new monarch." On page 306, we read that she fell into the hands of Edward I. as prisoner, and that "he assigned his manor of Brustwick for her residence, with an establishment suitable to her rank as Countess of Carrick." After the battle of Bannockburn Bruce obtained her release, with that of his daughter and sister, in exchange for the Earl of Hereford.

"Aunt Prue." You will find full directions for the treatment of pigeons in Tegetmeir's book on poultry. Perhaps our readers can tell you where to find the line—

"The floodgates of heaven are opened,"
applied to rain.

"An Old Boy" is anxious to obtain a copy of the *original* edition of "*Good Lady Bertha's Honeybroth*." Aunt Judy

fears he will find some difficulty in inducing any family to part with such a treasured relic of the nursery—at least, if it was valued as much by other children as her own.

"A. G." Try Archbishop Trench's works on the Parables and Miracles, Dean Goulburn's "*Pursuit of Holiness*," "*Thoughts on Personal Religion*," &c. (published by Rivingtons), or Mr. Sadler's admirable "*Church Teacher's Manual*," and "*Church Doctrine, Bible Truth*" (Bell and Daldy).

"A Constant Subscriber." Blank verse consists of lines written with due rhythm and accent, but without rhyme at their termination. Milton's "*Paradise Lost*," Tennyson's "*Idylls of the King*," Lord Derby's Translation of Homer, &c., &c., are instances of this style of poetry. The term is only applied to lines of ten syllables, or "heroic verse." Can our readers give the names of any books on versification?

Will any readers of "*Aunt Judy's Magazine*" kindly send "Two Little Doves" and "An Old Crabcatcher" some silkworms' eggs, in exchange for any number of old postage stamps, under six hundred. The "Little Doves" will pay the postage for the eggs; and will the sender kindly say how many times a day the worms must be fed? Address—The Miss Pophams, Hunstrete House, Chelwood, near Bristol.

"M. de G. M." informs "Mortimer Lightwood" that Charles, Elector Palatine, had two children: Charles, Count Palatine, and Charlotte Elizabeth, who married Philip I., Duke of Orleans, and was the ancestress of Philippe Egalité. Edward, Count Palatine, had: (1) Maria Louisa, who married Charles Theodore, Prince of Salm, and left children; (2) Anne, who married Henry Julius, Prince of Condé, and had two children; (3) Benedicta Henrietta, who

married John Frederick, Duke of Hanover, and was the ancestress of Frederick Augustus, King of Saxony.

Maurice and Philip left no children.

Will "Alice," whose eight questions were inserted in our August number, kindly send her address to the Editor (Ecclesfield, Sheffield), in order that a letter may be forwarded to her.

"G. H. King." March 25 is called *Lady Day* from its being kept as the feast of the Annunciation of the Blessed Virgin Mary. In France it is called *Notre Dame de Mars*.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, August 14th, 1872.

The readers of "Aunt Judy's Magazine" will be gratified to hear that the little patient, Janie D—, is rapidly improving; she has, indeed, gone on so exceedingly well, that instead of the fears being realized that were expressed in the report of her admission (see the Magazine for July) "that the poor little foot may have to be removed altogether," her progress has been beyond what her kind doctor had dared to predict, and it is now expected that she will be well enough to be sent for change of air, either to the Convalescent Hospital, Cromwell House, Highgate, or to the sea-side, which will probably be a still more pleasant change for her. Janie says that she will be very sorry to leave the many little friends she has made, and still more so the kind nurse who has become her special friend. Many of the Cot supporters have visited Janie, but some who have not done so may be interested in hearing about the friends Janie will be so sorry to leave: one of these is Annie L—, whose bed is just opposite "Aunt Judy's Cot," and the two little girls talk a great deal to each other. Although Annie suffers from heart disease, and is often very ill, yet

she has a happy contented spirit, and likes being in the Girls' ward. One day a lady overheard Annie say, "I don't call this much like a hospital." "What is it like, then, Annie—is it like home?" said the lady. "I think," the child answered brightly, "I think it is like a house of joy." Perhaps the young friends who so liberally support "Aunt Judy's Cot" will be of opinion that no more favourable criticism could have been pronounced upon the Hospital on which they have bestowed so much favour.

And now, for the first time, the managers have a further pleasant duty to discharge, and this is to report the establishment of the second "Aunt Judy's Cot," which, by desire of the Editor, is placed in the Boys' ward. It was a subject of special interest and curiosity among the boys to know who should be the first occupant of the new "Aunt Judy's Cot:." one said, "Let little Willie C— be the first;" but then he is already the occupant of the "Quiver Cot." Another suggested little Jem F—, with his sweet cherub face (one such as Murillo would have loved to paint); but he bears his cross of weakness and pain, lying in the Cot dedicated to the memory of "Frank and Miriam." Shall it be Dicky? a tiny four-year old (a prime favourite with all), who, when he wants a toy or a picture-book, says so prettily, "*Please, lady dear.*" No; on the whole, it seems best that Herbert P—, a gentle, patient, suffering boy of nine years old, shall be the first occupant. Herbert has undergone a careful examination, and a consultation has been held by several skilful surgeons, his case being one of much anxiety and danger; but although so ill, Herbert is not always grave and solemn—for sick children, like grown-up people, must be kept cheerful—and so he has his toys and picture-books to look at and play with, and he is glad to be amused. Sometimes he tries to join the other children in singing, and

one of his favourite hymns is that in which the verse occurs which tells of

—"the home for little children
Above the bright blue sky,
Where Jesus reigns in glory,
A home of peace and joy."

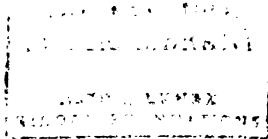
He, too, has many pleasant chats with his companions and near neighbours in the adjoining cots. It is a great blessing to the parents of these and all the poor children that their little ones can be tended with such care, and have all that medical science and skill can do for them. That this *second* cot, supported by "Aunt Judy's" readers, may be the means of alleviating much pain and weakness, and of prolonging many young lives, is the earnest hope of all who are associated in the good work.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," received to August 15th, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
E. A. C. (every two months)	0	5	0
Oria, Bradbourne Vicarage, Wirksworth (monthly, July and August)	0	1	0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (July and August)	0	2	0
The Black Kitten, Chiddingly Vicarage, Hawkhurst (every other month)	0	0	6
Miss Frederica Williams, Tring Park, Tring (annual)	1	1	0
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	2	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Carrie, for three months, 6d., Willie, for three months, 6d., School-room fines, 6d.	0	1	6
Four Children, Holmeby Hall, also some comforters, dolls, scrap-books, and some flannel garments made by them- selves (annual)	0	10	0
D. A. Watford (annual)	0	5	0
Fanny Green, The Vicarage, Ormskirk	0	2	0
The Girls at Derby House, Victoria Road, Gipsy Hill, Norwood	2	16	0

	£	s.	d.
Two Little Robins	0	0	4
88, Regent's Park Road	0	10	6
Ada, Ernest, and Edward Bowyer, Wonham Cottage, near Reigate	0	2	0
Forfeits from a Juvenile Ques- tion Club	0	3	0
Anonymous	0	5	0
Part contents of Edith, Bertie, and Mia's Money Box	0	1	9
Young Friends at Twyford	0	10	0
The Young Folks at Pencrabar	0	7	0
Mabel, Madeline, and Rosa- mond Birch	0	6	0
Janet Spicer, 31, Belgrave Square	0	2	6
G. M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
Collected by Nora Barker:			
Lennox, 1s., Frank, 1s., Mollie, 1s. 3d., William, 3d., Stray Pennies, 6s. 6d.	0	10	0
Bertie, George, and Maggie	0	1	3
Maud, for Jane D.	0	0	6
A Fish out of Water, and two Mermaids	0	4	0
Maude and Florrie (collected)	0	4	0
Lilcat	0	2	6
An Hoylake Sea Bird, for Jane D.	0	0	3
Two Maries, Aunt and Niece	0	4	0
A Nurse, a lover of Children	0	2	0
A Birthday Thank-offering	0	3	0
Two Little Birds	0	2	6
Mary, Susan, and Alice Blagg, Greenhill, Cheadle	0	3	0
Mamma, Edith, and Willie	0	1	0
Proceeds of a Bazaar, from E. H. G. and B. B., and the Four Blackberries of Bramble Hill	1	4	0
Edith Vernon, Kirk Ella, Hull	0	8	0
Aunt Prue, Worcester, clothes and toys.			
J. M. K. and K. I. R. H., some cards.			
"Ormskirk Gingerbread," a picture-book for Janie.			
Four Little Girls, some toys.			
Miss Wilson, a scrap-book.			
Emily, a scrap-book.			
Miss E. M. Trower, a drawing slate and some doll's clothes.			







SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EVENTS—MY COUSINS—CULTIVATING THE BEAUTIFUL—ELEANOR'S FIRST
BALL—CAPTAIN M'CRUSTIE.

IT seems to me that my biography is a very uneven performance. I seem to have dwelt so fully on some little things which took a very short time to happen, and to have gone much more rapidly over longer periods. And now I find very little to record of the four or five years which followed that summer when Madame was with us. Unless, indeed, I had had my old diaries to copy from, or were to relate each successive domestic or village incident to the best of my powers without them, which would be much too tedious both for me to write down, and for Eleanor to read.

The truth is, our lives passed in that plenty of occupation and happy peace which yield few striking incidents. I kept up an affectionate correspondence with the Bullers, and Eleanor never quite dropped hers with Madame.

At home, our own studies, the coming and going of the boys, the ups and downs of the parish, were our main subjects of interest. The chief events which broke the monotony of these few years were:

1. Clement took a scholarship, and various other school honours.
2. Poor Jack had a dreadful fever-illness, in which I was chief nurse, owing to a strange half-delirious fancy he took for having me near him.
3. Restoration of the church, and discovery of ecclesiastical antiquities, which made Mr. Arkwright (who was a devoted archaeologist) almost wild, and brought a great many clever, pleasant old gentlemen to the Rectory from time to time. With one or two of these Eleanor struck up lasting friendships and learned correspondences. They were irreverently classed by Jack as "Eleanor's old men." The "fad" of this date was "rubbing brasses."
4. Eleanor undertook the choir.
5. It was discovered that I had a soprano voice, which was considered rather a good one, even here, where voices of good tone and compass are the rule, instead of being, as in most south-country

villages, the too rare exception. Eleanor's voice is a contralto. These were our chief home incidents.

Then, as I said, we paid visits—to relatives of mine, and to old friends of the Arkwrights. My friends invited Eleanor, and Eleanor's friends invited me. People are very kind; and it was understood that we were happier together. I was fortunate enough to find myself possessed of some charming cousins living in a cathedral town; and at their house it was a great pleasure to us to visit. The cathedral services gave us great delight; when I think of the expression of Eleanor's face, I may almost say rapture. Then there was a certain church-bookseller's shop which had manifold attractions for us. Every parochial want that print and paper could supply was there met with; a convenience that bordered on luxury. There was a good store, too, of sacred prints, illuminated texts, and oak frames, from which we carried back sundry additions to the garnishing of our room, besides presents for Jack, who was as fond of such things as we were. Parish matters were, naturally, of perennial interest for us in our Rectory home; but if ever they became a fad, it was about this period.

But it was to a completely new fad that this visit finally led us, which I hardly know how to describe, unless as the fad of dressmaking and general ornamentation.

The neighbourhood abounded with pretty clerical and country homes, where my cousins were intimate; each one, so it seemed to Eleanor and me, prettier than the last: sunshiny and homelike, with irregular comfortable furniture, dainty with chintz, or dark with aged oak: old china, new books, music, sketches, needlework, and flowers everywhere, arranged with exquisite taste and variety.

"Do you know, Eleanor," said I, "I don't think we're houseproud at home. And women ought to be houseproud, I think. Our villagers are supposed to be, but I don't think we are at the Rectory. Of course we are as to cleanliness; Keziah takes care of that; but I mean over little tasteful, pretty refinements. It certainly, perhaps, is rather a waste of time arranging all these vases and baskets of flowers every day, but they are *very* nice to look at, and I think it civilizes one."

"You're not to blame," said Eleanor, decisively. "You're south-country to the backbone, and French on the top. It is we hard north-country folk, so busy foying at our fads; we working-classes—I always feel myself a working woman in half my sympathies, and in all

my energies—we business people, who neglect to cultivate ‘the beautiful.’ We’re quite wrong. But I think the beautiful is revenged on us,” added she, with one of her quick, bright looks, “by withdrawing itself. There’s nothing comparable for ugliness to the people of a manufacturing town.”

My mind was running on certain very ingenious and tasteful methods of hanging nosegays on the wall.

“Those baskets with ferns and flowers in, against the wall, were lovely, weren’t they?” said I. “Do you think we shall ever be able to think of such pretty things?”

“We’re not fools,” said Eleanor, briefly. “We shall do it when we set our minds to it. Meantime, we must make notes of whatever strikes us.”

“There are plenty of jolly old-fashioned flowers in the garden,” said I. It was a polite way of expressing my inward regret that we had no tropical orchids or strange stove plants. And Eleanor danced round me, and improvised a song, beginning—

“There are ferns by Ewden’s waters,
And heather on the hill.”

From the better adornment of the Rectory to the better adornment of ourselves was a short stride. Most of the young ladies in these country homes were very prettily dressed. Not à la Mrs. Perowne. Not in that milliner’s handbook style dear to “Promenades,” and places of public resort; but more daintily, and with more attention to the prettiest and most convenient of the prevailing fashions than Eleanor’s and my costumes displayed.

The toilettes of one young lady in particular won our admiration; and when we learned that her pretty things were made by herself, an overwhelming ambition seized upon us to learn to do the same.

“Women ought to know about all house matters,” said Eleanor, puckering her brow to a gloomy extent. “Dressmaking, cookery, and all that sort of thing; and we know nothing about any of them. I was thinking only last night, in bed, that if I were cast away on a desert island, and had to make a dress out of an old sail, I shouldn’t have the ghost of an idea where to begin.”

“I should,” said I. “I should sew it up like a sack, make three holes for my head and arms, and tie it round my waist with ship’s

rope. I could manage Robinson Crusoe dresses; it's the civilized ones that will be too much for me, I'm afraid."

"I believe the sail would go twice as far if we could gore it," said Eleanor, laughing. "But there's no waste like the wastefulness of ignorance; and oh, Margery, its the gores I'm afraid of! If skirts were only made the old-fashioned way, like a flannel petticoat! So many pieces all alike—run them together—hem the bottom—gather the top—and there you are, with everything straightforward but the pocket."

To our surprise we found that our new fad was a sore subject with Mrs. Arkwright. She reproached herself bitterly with having given Eleanor so little training in domestic arts. But she had been brought up by a learned uncle who considered needlework a waste of time, and she knew as little about gores as we did. She had also, unfortunately, known or heard of some excellent mother who had trained nine daughters to such perfection of domestic capabilities that it was boasted that they could never in after life employ a workwoman or domestic who would know more of her business than her employer. And this good lady was a standing trouble to poor Mrs. Arkwright's conscience.

Her self-reproaches were needless. General training is perhaps quite as good (if not better than) special, even for special ends. In giving us a higher education, in teaching us to use our eyes, our wits, and our common sense, she had put all meaner arts within our grasp when need should urge, and opportunity serve.

"Aunt Theresa was always dressing," I said to Eleanor, "but I don't remember anything that would help us. I was so young, you know. And then when one is young one is so stupid, one really resists information."

I was to have another chance, however, of gleaning hints from Aunt Theresa.

The Bullers came home again, and were sent to Ireland, and as Aunt Theresa said, "as soon as ever she was settled" she sent for Eleanor and me. There was no idea of my remaining permanently. It was only a visit.

The major (but he was a colonel now) and his wife were very little changed. The girls, of course, had altered greatly, and so had I. Maria was a fashionably-dressed young lady, with a slightly frail

appearance at times, as if Nature were still revenging the old mismanagement and neglect.

It did not need Aunt Theresa to tell us that she was her father's favourite daughter. But it was no capricious favouritism, I am sure. I believe Colonel Buller to have been one of those people whose hearts have depths of tenderness that are never sounded. The Bush House catastrophe had long ago been swept into the lumber-room of Aunt Theresa's memory, but the tender self-reproach of Maria's father was still to be seen in all his care and indulgence of her.

"He'll take me anywhere," said Maria, with affectionate pride. "He even goes shopping with me."

We liked Maria by far the best of the girls. Partly, no doubt, because she was our old friend, but partly, I think, because intimacy with her father had developed the qualities she inherited from him, and softened others.

To our great satisfaction we discovered that gores were no enigma to Maria, and she and Aunt Theresa good-naturedly undertook to initiate us into the mysteries of dressmaking.

There was an excellent opportunity. Eleanor was now eighteen, and Maria seventeen years old. Maria was to go to her first ball in Dublin, and Mrs. Arkwright consented to let Eleanor "come out" on the same occasion. Hence ball dresses, and hence also our opportunity for learning how to make them.

The Bullers' drawing-room was divided by folding-doors, and both divisions now overflowed with tarlatan and trimmings; but at every fresh inroad of callers (and they were not less frequent than of old) we young ones, and yards of flounces and finery with us, were swept by Aunt Theresa into the back drawing-room, like autumn leaves before a breeze.

The dresses were very successful, and so was the ball. I was so anxious to hear how Eleanor had sped, that I felt quite sure that I could not go to sleep, and that it was a farce to go to bed just when she was beginning to dance. I went, however, at last, and had had half a night's sound sleep before rustling, and chattering, and the light from bed-candles woke me to hear the news.

Maria was looking pale, and somewhat dishevelled, and a great deal of the costume at which we had laboured was reduced to rags. Eleanor's dress was intact, and she herself looked perfectly fresh,

partly because she had resisted, with great difficulty, the extreme length of train then fashionable, and partly from a sort of general compactness which seems a natural gift with some people. Poor Maria had nearly fainted after one of the dances, and had brought away a violent headache; but she declared that she had enjoyed herself, and would have stayed to relate her adventures, but Colonel Buller would not allow it, and sent her to bed. Eleanor slept with me, so our gossip was unopposed, except by warnings.

I set fire to my hair in the effort to decipher the well-filled ball card, but we put it out, and the candle also, and chatted in bed.

"You must have danced every dance," I said, admiringly.

"We sat out one or two that are down," said Eleanor; "and No. 21 was supper, but I danced all the rest."

"There was one man you danced several times with," I said, "but I couldn't make out his name. It looks as if it began with a G."

"Oh, it's not his real name," said Eleanor. "It's the one he says you used to call him by. One thing why I liked him, Margery dear, was because he said he had been so fond of you. You were such a dear little thing, he said. I told him the locket and chain were in good preservation."

"Was it Mr. George?" I cried, with so much energy, that Aunt Theresa (who slept next door) heard us, and knocked on the wall to bid us go to sleep.

"We're just going to," Eleanor shouted, and added in lower tones, to me, "Yes, it was Captain Abercrombie. Maria says he used to be very harum-scarum, but he 'turned good,' and is very good now. He seems clever, too, and Colonel Buller says he's a splendid soldier. And he is so delightfully fond of dancing: I had some jolly chats with him. Then there was Mr. O'Brien, a very handsome little Irishman, who dances splendidly, and he is amusing, Margery. He kept me in fits of laughing; and so very courteous and gentle too. But he does tell shocking stories! Sells, you know, to take one in. He told me all kinds of military stories, because he found out I knew nothing about soldiers. He worked me up into quite a rage about the awful punishments he pretended were inflicted. Wasn't it a shame? But that was not so bad as his telling me that Captain McCrustie had got a very fat wife and six children, and was a devoted father, but rather strict, and too fond of caning his boys."

"Who's Captain M'Crustie?" I asked; "and did you dance with him?"

"Yes. He asked me several times, and I'm sure I don't know why, for he was so cross and captious when I did. Quite rude, sometimes. I can't think why he didn't stick to the Misses St. Quentin."

"Did he dance a great deal with them?" I asked.

"Well, no, he didn't. But he said he liked them so very much. They were so thoroughly feminine, he said, and he disliked women who mimicked men. But, oh, Eleanor! he reminded me, whether in dress, or slang, or studies, several times of Clem in his way of talking; growling and hitting out, you know, all along. Sulky if one refused to argue, and then cross if one didn't come round to his views; and whenever he had the worst of the discussion, falling back on some general remark against women. He asked me five times, and he danced very badly; and I believe it was for nothing but to carry on the argument because I hadn't given in. I did give him three dances, and the second time I had got quite into the way of managing him. He smiled lots of times, and his face looks utterly different when he smiles."

"How did you manage him?" I anxiously inquired, finding Eleanor's narrative quite as entertaining as a novel. She laughed.

"Well, I really took to fighting with his own weapons. When he bullied me, I bullied him. I never could do it with Clem, of course, because boys won't stand it from their sisters; but I believe it would do him a world of good if somebody who wasn't his sister 'tackled' him that way. You know, I believe, if an Irishman was cross to one, that if one were meek and pathetic it would bring him to his knees in a minute—Irish people are so emotional. But a Scotchman would only hit the harder. When he took me back to Mrs. Buller after our second dance, he said we must have another as we'd got on so well, and that he knew he was a bear, and so on. But he's not exactly bearish, only he reminded me of the old kitchen poker at home. Keziah says it takes 'such a sight of scrubbing with sand-paper to keep it smooth;' and I'm sure the more you rub him the brighter he shines. Do you know, I blurted that about the sand-paper and the poker out to him, and I thought afterwards how rude it was, but he only laughed most good-humouredly. Then I was obliged to give him another dance to make up, and then we quarrelled worse than ever."

"Why—what about?" I asked.

"Well, it was that silly Mr. O'Brien. At least, I was silly for saying anything to him about Captain McCrustie, only it was just for talking' sake. I said something about his being so fond of contradicting, and Mr. O'Brien said, 'Oh, that's the height of compliment from a Scotchman,' and he quoted some old proverb—'fighting and scartin, is Scots folks cartin.' Well, Captain McCrustie was quite on the other side of the room, with his back to us, but I'm sure he heard. How, I can't conceive. He must have eyes in his back, and ears everywhere. And he turned round and gave Mr. O'Brien such a scowl. I couldn't have imagined anybody's face could have looked so awful. Do you remember the horseshoe frown in Red Gauntlet? But you can have no idea what he looked like. Perfectly murderous! And Mr. O'Brien has evidently got a very 'short' temper, as we say. And he got red in an instant, and said, in the suavest of tones, but very loud, how curious it was that certain races should have such long ears."

"I think he said very impertinent things," said I.

"Oh, I know he did," said Eleanor; "but they sound worse when anybody else says them. Irishmen don't seem able to hold their tongues if there's a repartee on the tip. Well! Captain McCrustie never moved at that, though he must have heard, and in three minutes Mr. O'Brien was cool again, and telling me what a good—'grand' he called him—fellow 'McCrustie' was. Then came my dance with Captain McCrustie, and he abused Mr. O'Brien so—calling him a puppy, and making all kinds of bitter skits at Irishmen, that, for fairness' sake, I took up his cudgels; and then, as usual, Captain McCrustie fell back on saying things about women, what kind of men women liked, and so on, and that made me angry, and we parted in a storm."

"Were all the gentlemen quarrelsome?" I asked, amazedly.

"Oh, my dear, no! Most of them were as stupid as owls. And Captain Abercrombie was so nice. I mean, neither rude like Captain McCrustie, nor silly like Mr. O'Brien. And why I like him was, because of his being connected with you."

Eleanor said this so emphatically that another knock came on the wall, and we were warned that it was nearly breakfast-time. I felt most interest, for my own part, in the Scotchman (I have Scotch blood in me, which lives for ever), and being at an age when one judges chiefly by looks, I said, "What is Captain McCrustie like?"

"Well, he's ugly in a way," said Eleanor; "and yet, just about the time that one is getting tired of Mr. O'Brien's neat features and bright eyes, and his jokes and compliments, one begins to get interested in Captain McCrustie's queer ways, and to see that his face is something more than handsome when he smiles. But Captain Abercrombie is quite different. It is no effort to talk to him, and one never thinks about his looks, he's so nice, and so fond of dogs, and of you, Margery."

"Shall I see him?" I asked.

"Oh yes," said Eleanor. "He's going to call to-morrow, I know, and very likely the Irishman too. But Captain McCrustie is going on leave."

"Girls! girls!" cried Aunt Theresa. And we went to sleep.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CUTTING OUT—MISS LINING THE DRESSMAKER ON GORES—THE VINE ONCE MORE—THE LAST DAYS OF MY GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

Soon after we returned from our visit to the Bullers, Eleanor and I resolved to prove the extent of the benefit we had reaped from Aunt Theresa's instructions by making ourselves some dresses of an inexpensive stuff that we bought for the purpose.

How well I remember the pattern! A flowering creeper, which followed a light stem upwards through yard after yard of the material. We had picked to pieces certain old bodies which fitted us fairly, and our first work was to lay these patterns upon the new stuff, with weights on them, and so to cut out our new bodies as easily as Maria (whose directions we were following) had prophesied that we should. When these and the sleeves were accomplished (and they looked most business-like), we began upon the skirts. We cut the back and the front breadths, and duly "sloped" the latter. Then came the gores. We folded the breadths into three parts: we took a third at one end, and two thirds at the other, and folded the slope accordingly. It became quite exciting.

"Who would have thought it was so easy?" said I.

Eleanor was almost prone upon the table, cutting the gore with large scissors which made a quite sempstress-like squeak. "The higher education fades from my view with every snip," she said, laughing. "Upon my word, Margery, I begin to believe this sort of

thing is our vocation. It is great fun, and there is absolutely no brain wear and tear."

The gores were parted as she spoke, and (to do us justice) were exactly the shape of the tarlatan ones that Aunt Theresa had cut. But when we came to put them together they wouldn't fit without turning one of them the wrong side out. Eleanor had boasted too soon. We got headaches and backaches with stooping and puzzling. We cut up all our stuff, but the gores remained obstinate. By no ingenuity could we combine them so as to be at once in proper order, the right side out, and the right side (of the pattern) up. I really think we cried over them with weariness and disappointment.

"Algebra's a trifle to it," was poor Eleanor's conclusion.

I went out to clear my brain by a walk, and happening, as I returned, to meet Jack, I confided our woes to him. One could tell Jack anything.

"You've got it wrong somehow," said Jack, "linking" me. "Come to Miss Lining's."

Miss Lining was our village dressmaker. A very bad one, but still she could gore a skirt. She was not a native of the village, and signified her superior gentility by a mincing pronunciation. She had also a hiss with the sibilants peculiar to herself. Before I could remonstrate, Jack was knocking at the door.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Lining. Miss Margery has been making a dress, and she's got into a muddle with the gores. Now, how do you manage with gores, Miss Lining?" Jack cheerfully inquired, taking his hat off, and accepting a well-dusted chair. There was now nothing for it but to explain my difficulties, which I did, Miss Lining saying "Yiss, miss" at every two or three words. When I had said my say, she sucked the top of her brass thimble thoughtfully for some moments, and then spoke as an oracle.

"There's a hinside and a hout to the stuff? Yiss, miss. And a hup and a down? Yiss, miss."

"And quite half the gores won't fit in anywhere," I desperately interposed. Miss Lining took another taste of the brass thimble, and then said, "In course, miss, with a patterned thing there's as many gores to throw hout as to huse. Yiss, miss."

"Are there?" said I. "But what a waste!"

"Ho, no, miss! you cuts the body out of the gores you throws hout, miss——"

"Well, if you get the body out of them, there must be a waist!"

Jack broke in, as he sat fondling Miss Lining's tom cat.

"Ho, no, sir!" said Miss Lining, who couldn't have seen a joke, to save her dignity. "They cuts to good add-vantage, sir."

The mystery was now clear to me, and Jack saw this by my face.

"You twig?" said he briefly, setting down the cat.

"Quite," said I. "Our mistake was beginning with the bodies, but we can get some more stuff."

"An odd bit always comes in," said Miss Lining, speaking, I fear, from an experience of bits saved from the dresses of village patrons. "Yiss, miss."

"Well, good-afternoon Miss Lining," said Jack, who never suffered, as Eleanor and I sometimes did, from a difficulty in getting away from a cottage; "thank you very-much. Have you heard from your sister at Buxton lately?"

"Last week, sir," said Miss Lining.

"And how is she?" said Jack, urbanely.

He never forgot any one, and he never grudged sympathy: two qualities which made him beloved of the village.

"Quite well, thank you, sir, and the same to you," said Miss Lining, beaming; "except that she do suffer a deal in her inside, sir."

"Chamomile tea is very good for the inside, I believe," said Jack, putting on his hat with perfect gravity.

"So I've 'eerd; yiss, sir," said Miss Lining; "and there's something of the same in them pills that's spoke sq well of in your magazine, sir. I think I sent by the carrier for a box, sir, on Saturday last, and would have done sooner, but for waiting for Mrs. Barker to pay for the pelerine I made her out of her uncle's funeral scarf. Yiss, miss."

Jack was very seldom at a loss, but on this occasion he seemed puzzled. "Pills recommended in our magazine?" he said, as we strolled up towards the Vicarage. "It's those medical tracts you and Eleanor have been taking round lately."

"There's nothing about pills in them," said I; "they're about drains, and fresh air, and cleanliness. Besides, she said our magazine."

"We don't give them any magazine but the 'Parishioners' Pennyworth,' and the missionary one," said Jack. "I'm stumped, Margery."

But in a few minutes I was startled by his seizing me by the shoulders, and leaning against me in a paroxysm of laughter.

"Oh, Margery, I've got it! It is the 'Parishioners' Pennyworth.' There's an advertisement been at the end of it for months, like a fly-leaf, of Norton's chamomile pills."

And as I unravelled to Eleanor the mystery of our dressmaking difficulties, we could hear Jack convulsing Mrs. Arkwright with a perfect reproduction of Miss Lining's accent—"Them pills that's spoke so well of in your magazine. Yiss, m'm."

We got some more material, and finished the dresses triumphantly. By the next summer we were skilful enough to use our taste with some freedom and good success.

I was then fifteen, and in long dresses. I remember some most tasteful costumes which we produced, and as we contemplated them, as they hung, flounced, furbelowed, and finished, upon pegs, Eleanor said, "I wonder where we shall display these this year!"

How little we knew! How far we were from guessing that the dresses we had made alike to the nicety of a bow (because we thought it ladylike for sisters to be dressed alike) were not to be worn together!

About this time Mr. Arkwright got a letter from one of my relations on the subject of my going to live with my great-grandfather and grandmother. They were now very old. My great-grandfather was becoming "childish," and the dear little duchess was old and frail for such a charge alone. They had no daughter. The religious question was laid aside. My most Protestant relatives thought my duty in the matter overwhelming, and with all my clinging of heart to the moor home I felt myself that it was so.

I don't know how I got over the parting. I wandered hopelessly about familiar spots; and wished I had made sketches of them; but how could I know I had not all life before me? The time was short, and preparations had to be made. This kept us quiet. At the last, Jack put in all my luggage, and did everything for me. Then he kissed me, and said, "God bless you, Margery," and "linking" Eleanor by force, led her away and comforted her like the good, dear boy he was. And Clem drove me so recklessly down the steep hill, and over the stones, that the momentary expectation of an upset dried my tears, and I did not see much of the villagers' kind and too touching farewells.

And so to the bleak station again, and the familiar old porter, whom

fate seemed to leave long enough at his post, and on through the whirling railway panorama, by which one passes to so much joy and so much sorrow—and then I was at the Vine once more.

I wonder if I am like my great-grandmother in her youth? Some people (Elspeth among them) declare that it is so; and others that I am like my poor mother. I suppose I have some Vandaleur features from an eerie little incident which befel me on the threshold of the Vine; an appropriate beginning to a life that always felt like a weird, shadowy dream.

I did not ring the bell of the outer gate on my arrival, because Adolphe (grown up, but with the old, ruddy boy's face on the top of his man's shoulders) was anxiously waiting for me, and devoted himself to my luggage, telling me that master was in the garden. Thither I ran so hastily, that a straggling sweetbriar caught my hat and my net, and dragged them off, sending my hair over my shoulders. My hair is not long, however, like Eleanor's, and it curls, and I sometimes wear it loose, so I did not stop to rearrange it, but hurried on towards my great-grandfather, who was coming slowly to meet me from the other end of the terrace, his hands behind his back, as of old. At least, I thought it was to meet me; but as he came near I saw that he was unconscious of my presence. He looked very old, his face was very white and shrivelled, like a crumpled white kid glove; his wild blue eyes, insensible to what was before them, seemed intently fixed on something that no one else could see, and he was talking to himself as we call it, when folk talk with the invisible. It was very silly, but I really felt the colour fading from my face with fright. My great-grandfather's back was to the west, where a few bars of red across the sky, as it was to be seen through the Scotch firs, were all that remained of the sunset. That strange light was on everything, of which pre-Raphaelite painters are so foud. I was tired with my long journey and previous excitement; and when I suddenly remembered that Mr. Vandaleur was said to have in some measure lost his reason, a shudder came over me. In a moment more he saw me. I think my crimson cloak caught his eye, but his welcome was hardly less alarming than his abstraction. He started, and held up his hands, and a pained, puzzled expression troubled his face. Then a flush, which seemed to make him look older than the whiteness; and then, with a shrill, feeble cry of "*Victoire, ma belle!*" he tottered towards me, so hastily

that I thought he must have fallen; but, like a vision, a little figure flitted from the French window of the drawing-room, and in a moment my great-grandmother was supporting him, and soothing him with gentle words in French. I could see now how helpless he was. For a bit he seemed still puzzled and confused; but he clung to her and kissed her hand, and suffered himself to be led indoors. Then I followed them, through the window, into the room, where the candles were not yet lighted for economy's sake; the glare of the red sunset bars making everything dark to me, with a strange sense of gloom.

It would be hard to imagine a stronger contrast than that between my life in my new home and my life in my home upon the moors. At the Arkwrights we lived so essentially with the times. Our politics, on the whole, were liberal; our theology inclined to be broad; our ideas on social subjects were reformatory, progressive, experimental. Scientific subjects were a speciality of the household; and, living in a manufacturing district, mere neighbourhood kept us with the great current of mercantile interests. We argued each other into a general unfixedity of opinions; and, full of youthful dreams of golden ages, were willing to believe this young world—where not yet we, but only our words could fly—to be but upon the threshold of true civilization. Above all, life seemed so short, our hands were so full, so overfull of work, the daylight was not long enough for us; and we grudged meals and sleep.

And how different it was under the shadow of this old Vine! I am very thankful, now, that I had grace, under the sense of "wasted time," which was at first so irritating, to hold by my supreme child-duty towards my aged parents against the mere modern fuss of "work," against what John Wesley called the "lust of finishing" any labour, and to serve them in their way rather than in my own. But the change was very great. How we "potttered" through the days!—with what needless formalities, what slowness, what indecision! How fatiguing is enforced idleness! How lengthy were the evening meals, where we sat, trifling with the vine leaves under a single dish of fruit, till the gloaming deepened into gloom!

At fifteen one is very susceptible of impressions; very impatient of what one is not used to. The very four-post bed in which I slept oppressed me, and the cracked basin held together for years by the circular hole in the old-fashioned wash-stand. The execution

picture only made me laugh now. Then, as to the meals. No doubt a great many people eat and drink too much, as we are beginning to discover. Whether we at the Vicarage did, I cannot say; but the change to the unsubstantial fare on which very old people like the Vandaleurs keep the flickering light of life aglow was considerable; and yet in this slow, vegetating existence my appetite soon died away. The country was flat, and damp too; and by-and-by neuralgia kept me awake at night, as regularly as the ghost of my great-grandfather had done in years gone by. But it is strange how quickly unmarked time slips on. Day after day, week after week, ran by, till a lassitude crept over me in which I felt amazed at former ambitions, and a certain facility of sympathy, which has been in many respects an evil, and in many a good to me, seemed to mould me to the interests of the fading household. And so I lived the life of my great-grandparents, which was as if science made no strides, and men no struggles; as if nothing were to be done with the days, but to wear through them in all patient goodness, loyal to a long-fallen dynasty, regretful of some ancient virtues and courtesies, tender towards past beauties and passions, and patient of succeeding sunsets, till this aged world should crumble to its close.

My great-grandfather came to know me again, though his mind was in a disordered, dreary condition; from old age, Elspeth said; but it often recalled what I had heard of the state of his mother's intellect before her death. The dear little old lady's intellects were quite bright, and happily, not only entire, but cultivated. I do not know how people who think babies and servants are a woman's only legitimate interests would like to live with women who have either never met with, or long outlived them. I know how my dear granny's educated mind and sense of humour helped us over a dozen little domestic difficulties, and broke the neck of fidgets that seemed almost inevitable at her great age, and in that confined sphere of interests.

I certainly faded in our twilight existence, as if there were some truth in the strange old theory that very aged people can withdraw vital force from young companions and live upon it. But every day and hour of my stay made me love and reverence my great-grandmother more and more, and be more and more glad that I had come to know her, and perhaps be of some little service to her.

Indeed, it was my poor grandfather's condition that kept us so much among the shadows. The old lady had a delightful youthfulness of spirit, and took an almost wistful pleasure in hearing about our life at the Arkwrights', as if some ambitious Scotch blood in her would fain have kept better pace with the currents of the busy world. But when my grandfather joined us, we had to change the subject. Modern ideas jarred upon him. And it was seldom that he was not with us. The tender love between the old couple was very touching.

"It must seem strange to you, my dear, to think of such long lives so little broken by events," said my great-grandmother. "But your dear grandfather and I have never been apart for a day since our happy marriage."

I do not think they were apart for an hour whilst I was with them. He followed her about the house, if she left him for many minutes, crying, "Victoire! Victoire!" chiefly from love, but I was sometimes spiteful enough to think also because he could not amuse himself.

"The master's calling for you again," said Elspeth, with some impatience, one day when grandmamma was teaching me a bit of dainty cookery in the kitchen.

"Oh, fly, petite!" she cried to me, "and say that his majesty has summoned the duchess."

Much bewildered, I ran out, and met my great-grandfather on the terrace, crying, "Victoire! Victoire!" in fretful tones.

"His majesty has summoned the duchess, sir," said I, dropping a slight courtesy, as I generally did on disturbing the old gentleman.

To my astonishment, this seemed quite to content him. He drew in his elbows, and spread the palms of his hands with a very polite bow, saying, "Bien, bien," and after murmuring something else in French, which I did not catch, but which I fancy was an acknowledgment of the prior claims of royalty, he folded his hands behind his back and wandered away down the terrace, as I rushed off to my confectionery again.

I found that this use of the old fable, which had calmed my great-grandmother in past days, was no new idea. It was in fact a graceful fiction which deceived nobody, and had been devised by my great-grandmother out of deference to her husband's prejudices. In the long years when they were very poor, their poverty was made, not only tolerable, but graceful, by Mrs. Vandaleur's untiring energy.

but (though he wouldn't, or perhaps couldn't, find any occupation by which to add to their income) the sight of his Victoire, who should have been a duchess, doing any menial work so distracted him, that my grandmother had to devise some method to secure herself from his observation when she washed certain bits of priceless lace which redeemed her old dresses from commonness, or cooked some delicacy for Mons. le Duc's dinner, or mended her honourable clothes. So Jeanette's old fable came into use; first in jest, and then as an adopted form for getting rid of my great-grandfather when he was in the way. It must have astonished a practical woman like my great-grandmother to find how completely it satisfied him. But there must have been a time when his helplessness and impracticability tried her in many ways, before she fairly came to realise that he never could be changed, and her love fell in with his humours. On this point he was humoured completely, and never inquired on what business his deceased majesty of France required the attendance of the duchess that should have been!

To do him justice, if he was a helpless, he was a very tender husband.

"He has never said a rude or an unkind word to me since we were boy and girl together," said the little old lady, with tears in her eyes. And, indeed, courtesy implies self-discipline; and even now the old man's politeness checked his petulance over and over again. He never gave up the habit of gathering flowers for my grandmother, and such exquisite contrasts of colour I never saw combined by any other hand. Another accomplishment of his was also connected with his love of plants.

"It's little enough a man can do about a house the best of times," said Elspeth, "and the master's just as feckless as a bairn. But he makes a fine sallet."

I shudder almost as I write the words. How little we thought that my poor grandfather's one useful gift would have so fatal an ending!

But I must put it down in order. It was the end of many things. Of my life at the Vine among them, and very nearly of my life in this world altogether. My great-grandfather made delicious salads. I have heard him say that he preferred our English habit of mixing ingredients to the French one of dressing one vegetable by itself, but, he

said, we did not carry it far enough; we neglected so many useful herbs. And so his salads were compounded not only of lettuce and cress, and so forth, but of dandelion, sorrel, and half a dozen other field or garden plants. Sometimes one flavour preponderated, sometimes another, and the sauce was always good.

Now it is all over, it seems to me that I must have been very stupid not to have paid more attention to the strange flavour in the salad that day. But I was thinking chiefly of the old lady, who was not very well (Elspeth had an idea that she had had a very slight "stroke," but how this was we cannot know now), whilst my grandfather was almost flightily cheerful. I tasted the salad, and did not eat it, and was the less inclined to complain of it as they seemed perfectly satisfied.

Then my grandmother was taken ill. At first we thought it a development of what we had noticed. Then Mr. Vandaleur became ill also, and we sent Adolphe in haste for the doctor. At last we found out the truth. The salad was full of young leaves of monkshood. Under what delusion my poor grandfather had gathered them we never knew. Elspeth and I were busy with the old lady, and he had made the salad without help from any one.

From the first the doctor gave us little hope, and they sank rapidly. Their priest, for whom Adolphe made a second expedition, did not arrive in time; they were in separate rooms, and Elspeth and I flitted from one to the other in sad attendance. The dear little old lady sank fast, and died in the evening.

Then the doctor impressed on us the necessity of keeping her death from my great-grandfather's knowledge.

"But supposing he asks?" said I.

"Say any soothing thing your ready wit may suggest, my dear young lady. But the truth, in his present condition, would be a fatal shock."

It haunted me. "Supposing he asks." And late in the evening he did ask! I was alone with him, and he called me.

"Marguerite, dear child, thou wilt tell me the truth. Why does my wife, my Victoire, thy grandmother, not come to me?"

Pondering what lie I could tell him, and how, an irresistible impulse seized me. I bent over him and said,

"Dear sir, the king has summoned the duchess." Does the mind regain power as the body fails? My great-grandfather turned his

head, and, as his blue eyes met mine, I could not persuade myself that he was deceived.

"The will of His Majesty be done," he said faintly, but firmly.

The next few moments seemed like years. Had I done wrong? Had it done him harm? Above all, what did he mean? Were his words part of one last graceful dream of the dynasty of the white lilies, or was his loyal submission made now to a Majesty not of France, not even of this world? It was an intense relief to me when he spoke again.

"Marguerite!"

I knelt by the bedside, and he laid his hand upon my head. An exquisite smile shone on his face.

"Good child; pauvre petite! His Majesty will call me also, before long. Is it not so? And then thou shalt rest."

His fine face clouded again with a wandering, troubled look, and his fingers fumbled the bed-clothes. I saw that he had lost his crucifix in moving his hand to my head. I gave it him once more, and he clasped his hand over it, and carrying it to his lips with a smile, closed his eyes like some good child going to sleep.

And Thou, oh King of kings, didst summon him, as the dark faded into dawn!

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOME AGAIN.—HOME NEWS.—THE VERY END.

Now it is past it seems like a dream, my life at the Vine and its sad end. If indeed it could be justly called a sad end which took away together, and with little pain, those dear souls whose married life had not known the parting of a day, and who in death were not (even by a day) divided.

And so I went back to the moors. I was weak and ill when I started, but every breath of air on my northward journey seemed to bring strength.

There are no events in that porter's life, I am convinced. He looked just the same, and took me and my boxes quite coolly, though I felt inclined to shake hands with him in my delight. I did cry for very joy as we toiled up the old sandy hill, and the great moors welcomed me back. Then came the church, then the Vicarage, with the union-jack out of my window, and the villagers were at their doors—and I was at home. Oh, how the dear boys tore me to pieces!

There was no very special news, it seemed. Clement had been very good in taking my class at school, and had established a cricket club.

Jack had positively found a new fungus, which would probably be named after him. "Boy's luck," as we all said! Captain Abercrombie had been staying with an old uncle at a place close by, only about twelve miles off. And he was constantly driving over. "So very good-natured to the boys," Mr. Arkwright said. And there was to be a school-children's tea on my birthday.

My birthday has come and gone, and I am sixteen now. Dear old Eleanor and I have gone back to our old ways. She had left my side of our room untouched. It was in talking of our recent parting, and all that has come and gone in our lives, that the fads came upon us of writing our biographies this winter.

And here, in the dear old kitchen, round which the wild wind howls like music, with the dear boys dreaming at our feet, we bring them to an end.

* * * * *

This dusty relic of an old fad had been lying by for more than a year, when I found it to-day, in emptying a box to send some books in to Oxford, to Jack.

Eleanor should have had it, for we are parted, after all; but her husband has more interest in hers, so we each keep our own.

She is married, to George Abercrombie, and I mean to paste the bit out of the newspaper account of their wedding on to the end of this, as a sort of last chapter. It would be as long as all the rest put together if I were to write down all the ups and downs, and ins and outs, that went before the marriage, and I suppose these things are always very much alike.

I like him very much, and I am going to stay with them. The wedding was very pretty. Captain McCrustie was George's best man, and so I was with him as first bridesmaid, and he didn't growl at me at all. Clement had Maria Buller. He had been very sulky about the engagement, and then suddenly cleared up, and has been jolly ever since. He had got into some muddle, too, and thought I was going to marry "Mr. George." Jack threw shoes to such an extent, that when I went to change my white ones I couldn't find a complete pair to put on. He says he meant to pick them up again, but our new puppy thought they were thrown for him, and he never brought them back. Dear boy!

The old uncle helps George, who I believe is his heir, but at present he sticks to the regiment. It seems so funny that Eleanor should

now be living there, and I here. In her letter to-day she says: "Fancy, Margery, my having quarrelled with Mrs. Minchin and not known it! She called on me to-day and solemnly forgave me, whereby I learned that she had been 'cutting' me for six weeks. When she said: 'No doubt you thought it very strange, Mrs. Abercrombie, that I never called on your mother whilst she was with you,' I was obliged to get over it the best way I could, for I dare not tell her I had never noticed it. I think my offence was something about calls, and I must be more particular. But George and I have been sketching at every spare moment this lovely weather. Oh, Margery dear, I do often feel so thankful to the mother for having given us plenty of rational interests. I could really imagine even *our* quarrelling or getting tired of each other, if we had nothing but ourselves in common. As it is, you can't tell, till you have a husband of your own, what a double delight there is in everything we do together. As to social ups and downs, and not having much money or fine dresses, a 'collection' alone makes one almost too indifferent. Do you remember the mother's saying long ago, that intellectual pleasures have this in common with the consolations of religion, that they are such as the world can neither give nor take away?"

THE END.

THE BURN IN THE SUMMER NIGHT.



RIGHT moonlight downward shining
Glanced on the pebbly burn,
With every eddy dancing,

Dancing at every turn:
Blithely the burn was singing,
As it rippled on the strand,
A happy story bringing
From the sleeping upper-land.
It sang of marshes where at night
Long strings of wild-fowl pass,
Where the summer winds play midst the nodding tufts
Of fleecy cotton-grass,
And where through mosses deep
Its younger self doth creep,
Living, yet half asleep.

And of deep woods it sang,
Where, at the summer noon,
No stray breeze cometh, nor at night
The shimmer of the moon—
But silence, silence, silence,
Broodeth by night and day,
Save when the cushat cooeth
On the tall pine's topmost spray,
Rocking and rocking to and fro
On winds that never breathe below.
And of wide heaths it told,
Long rolling swathes of purple heather,
Whence, from furze coverts, flakes of gold
Are blown about in windy weather;
And where the plovers, wheeling in the sky,
Utter their wild and weird, and plaintive cry.
It told of rustic bridges, too,
Where lingering lovers lean—
Two twining figures blent in one,
As in a mirror seen.
And of quiet hamlets sang the burn—
Hamlets that rise beside the brink
Of pebbly shallows, where at eve
The homeward cattle stop to drink;
Of dusty mills, where ever and aye
The merry millwheels whirl,
And of the jolly miller's boy,
Who loves the milking girl—
That blue-eyed, rosy, brown-lock'd lass,
Who morn and eve the mill must pass
To milk the kine i' the dewy grass.
Such tales as these the burn was telling,
Telling to the silent night,
Rising, falling, sinking, swelling.
Dark waves breaking into light;
Such song as this the burn was singing,
As it rippled on the sand,
A happy, peaceful story bringing
From the sleeping upper-land;—
And, tranced, I heard its quiet refrain,
Again repeated and again.

GREVILLE J. CHESTER.

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.

Y DEAR TOBY,

This is positively my last letter to you for the present.

You are becoming insatiable. I undertook to ransack my old diary for your edification, but I only promised to do so on the condition that you made use of the hints in practice. I see, however, that you have a tendency to look for your fun and amusement in my letters, and not in the places to which they tell you to go. This will do you no good. If you want to learn, you must go to the things and places themselves, and find out what fun there is to be got from them for yourself.

Now, I wish to put you in the way of enjoying the country by yourself, and on your own resources. I therefore have omitted to mention such sports and amusements as riding, and fox-hunting, and shooting parties, whether in field or covert, and games such as cricket and football. I have a store of hints about them, too, but these it is not my present object to divulge.

When I was your age I only got them sparingly, and you must not expect such things except as treats. If you can learn from what I have told you to amuse yourself by yourself, you will have learnt your lessons well. Not to be a nuisance to your neighbours by depending on them for your fun and interests is a negative duty, which is not as commonly carried out as it should be. How then do we stand? I am writing my last letter to you, considering that I have suggested to you enough, and far more than enough, to employ all your leisure time for a whole year; but in case I have not done so, and have not provided for some emergency which may arise on your rambles during the next year, I propose now to run over a great deal of ground very quickly, and you must catch what you can as we go. Where, then, am I to begin? As I sit writing to you, the question is answered. Up the passage—servants never will keep the kitchen door shut—comes an unmistakeable odour. Grouse, it must be, and nothing else; and so I take the hint and begin with the moors. This is where we will start on our imaginary ramble.

Supposing, then, that you chance to be on the moors somewhere about this time next year, what will there be for you to do? I refer to the old diary of the date when I was just your age, and I see the following entry: "*Went with Melchior to Edgehill. Shot a magpie, and shot at a stone on a wall, thinking it was a grouse.*" I remember that 12th of August well. It was the first of a series of annual visits to Edgehill on the same day of the year. Our kind friends lived on the moors. They possessed a small piece of moor and some fields and a plantation, which ran at the back of the house. There were boys in the family, and we were invited to join them in a grand attack on whatever we could find on the bit of moor and in the plantation. Duly on the 11th the pony was saddled, and riding turn and turn about, our guns and bags strapped behind, we climbed the big hills which lay between us and our destination. The question, "Which way does the wind blow?" was all absorbing during the evening of the 11th. On this depended our chance of sport. If the wind lay right, possibly, when the shooters on the surrounding moors began their attack, the disturbed birds might follow the wind, and be driven to our moor. Otherwise we had but little chance. One thing, however, must be done—we must get up before daylight. The farming man had sown a corner of the field, adjoining the plantation, with corn: all with a view to getting the birds to come and feed there. We were to creep round at the break of dawn, and try our luck at this decoy.

Restless, and eager to begin, we were sent to bed early, and were roused again before it was light. A cap fired up the chimney to clear the nipples of the guns—up the chimney, because, had it been let off outside the house in the stillness of the morning, it might have frightened the birds which we hoped were feeding on the corn stubble, a glass of milk, a filling of shot-bags and powder-flasks, were all the preliminaries necessary before we started on our journey. "Look here, young 'un; if you tread on sticks, and make a row, we will send you back." By this I understood that we were to stalk our game. Stooping, we crept along the side of the old stone wall. The sun had not shown himself. A thick mist covered the country; twenty yards in front nothing but vague shadows were visible. On all sides we heard the grouse calling to each other. The fresh smell of the morning and the heather was inspiring. Alas! for our luck; no birds were feeding on the corn. But as I strained

my eyes, looking into the mist, I thought I detected, seated on the wall of loose stones, a grouse. More than that, if my eyes were wrong my ears could not deceive me. A distinct cackle came from the very spot. I whispered my discovery to my comrades. It was considered doubtful whether the object I saw was a stone or a bird, but the cackle was in my favour. As it was my discovery I was to shoot. With my utmost precision I rested my elbow on the wall and took a long aim. Bang and whirr! The shot rattled against the wall, and the wings of a grouse, which had been sitting, not on the wall, but at the foot of it in the road on the other side, whistled and disappeared in the mist. My bird, or rather my stone, remained in its original position; and the only consolation I could get was in the little grey splashes of lead on the rough moor stone on the wall. Hardly had this occurred when the sound of guns was heard on the moor far away to our right hand. We ducked down close to the wall and waited. Presently forms appeared coming swiftly but silently towards us, growing larger and larger, till they seemed like the roc in the story of Sinbad the Sailor. There were three grouse swooping towards us close above our heads. I saw a flash issue from Melchior's gun-barrel, and before I heard the sound my own trigger had been pulled. One bird fell.

"The sun now rose upon the right, out of the 'heath' came he."

The mist rose, and was blown off the moors by the morning breeze. The transformation scene completed itself; even the red light was not wanting, for the heather blazed in a pink glory under the hot August sun as we went home to breakfast. Off again after a snipe, which was in the habit of roosting in the rushes on a bit of marsh at the bottom of the plantation, but he was not there. We found his bed and the marks of his long bill in the peat where he had searched for his breakfast, but he had gone. Of course, Toby, there are other things to be found on moors besides grouse and heather. There are flowers, some peculiar to such places, and very lovely. I once came across an emerald green patch of grass on the slope of a hill, where the ground was boggy from a spring which rose there and trickled down to the trout stream below, and it was a blaze of *Boq pimpernel*, with its exquisitely tender pink flowers; of *Sundew* (*drosera*), with its odd sticky red leaves stuck over with hairs, each capped by a

bead of dew, and sometimes covered with dead little flies, which had been glued as by birdlime to the plant; and lastly, of perhaps the most delicate wild-flower that exists, *Campanula hederacea*, the very tiniest bluebell, creeping all over the bright emerald green grass. Of ferns, you will find beech and oak ferns, mountain fern, and hard fern, besides the common ones. Avoid places where the cotton grass shakes its white fluffy head in the wind if you wish to avoid sinking in a bog. Are you thirsty? Help yourself to handfuls of black bilberries, but do not take by mistake the berries of one of the heaths which they say nothing but crows eat, and are called crowberries. You will find the little red carberries or cowberries, and perhaps cranberries. But enough of moors; we have to get over the ground quicker than this.

Change the scene and get to the side of a pond. If you find yourself in such a position next spring or summer, think of your rod and tackle. Are there trout in it?—fish early in the morning and late in the evening in the summer, unless the weather is very stormy and rough. Then get to the roughest side, and throw close to the bank. Choose this side in preference to throwing with the wind at your back, for remember that fish go in search of food, and therefore, where their food is, there you must throw for them. Any flies which are beaten down on the water drift with the wind to the rough side of the pond. If the weather is very wet, and the water muddy, set night lines. Not lines to be in the water only during the night, but while you are fishing from the bank with your rod. Remember that trout are not eels, so do not use gimp hooks and string, but a yard and a half of gut, and two small hooks; one at the end, and the other an inch and a half above it. Bait with a worm, and drop it in close to the side by roots or stones where you have seen fish dart out from the side before. Such places are their breakfast and dining rooms, and they come back thither to feed. About ponds water-hens linger in the weeds. If there are perch in the pond, and you find bobbing with a float monotonous, see if there is a side of the pond where the water is shallow and there are plenty of stones at the bottom. Should the wind be rough and blowing, on such a side you can get sport by throwing your worm as you would for trout in a stream close to the bank. The perch will dart out at it from among the stones. Have you no pond to go to? Perhaps there will be some little brook near. If there are not trout in it, perhaps you will find

some roach. Fix some pins at the end of your stick by way of a spear, have another stick with which to turn over the flat stones at the bottom, and dab your spear on the roach as they lie on the sand under the stones. They are rather good to eat when toasted, and served up on toast. Or if there are no roach, perhaps there will be cray-fish. These will give you sport both by day and night. When the sun is out you will find them under the stones. It requires a neat hand to grab them before they have grabbed you with their lobster-like claws. If you want to catch them in quantities, you must make a hoop of iron or wood, and stretch a piece of net over it flat. Attach strings by which you can suspend it from the end of a pole, when it will look like one of a pair of scales: in the centre of the net, and, in fact, all over it, tie bits of liver, and lower your net so baited into a likely hole with plenty of stones at the bottom. Have several such nets at work, and keep looking at them every half-hour, or at less intervals of time. You will probably find, at least, one cray clinging to each bit of liver, nor will he drop it to run away. You can lift them all bodily from the water. On some nights you will catch quantities, while on other nights they will not come out.

Nor must you omit to catch and observe the flies that are born on the banks of the stream. Never miss the opportunity of catching the flies that are about the banks of any piece of water. You can catch them with your hand, if you are quick, as they flutter over the reeds and grass, or come sailing down on the bosom of the stream. Notice the colours of the bodies and wings. Keep a note-book. Think of your feathers, and invent an imitation of the fly before you, putting down in your book the recipe. The body of the fly, say, is orange; put down: *Body, orange silk*. The wings of the fly are two in number, and gauzy; put down: *Winged fly*, as opposed to hackle fly, on account of the number of wings, and *starling's wing*, or *light feather from under a young grouse's wing*, according to the shade. Perhaps *jay's wing* is the colour you are most reminded of. The legs look reddish or sandy; put down: *Legs ginger, or red hackle, or feather from under landrail's wing*. If the fly has four wings you know he must be imitated hacklewise.

But this is not all. Out of the stream you may stock an aquarium with freshwater shrimps and all the rest, or you may make a collection of freshwater algæ, and either keep them growing alive or press them in the same way as you would sea-weeds. Talking of freshwater

aquaria, if you keep beetles or newts or tadpoles, have a rock in the middle, *above* water, where they can indulge their amphibian tastes, and do not omit to cover the top of the vessel with gauze, or you will find your beetles flying about the room at night, and will lose your newts and little frogs under tables and chairs.

Shall you have nothing but a wood to fall back upon for amusement? What have you not got in a wood? Birds' nests to rob; squirrels to pursue; moths to entice to their fate; flowers in abundance, of all sorts and kinds too numerous here to mention. Moreover, you may do the game good service by pursuing weasels and stoats. Get behind a tree close to a little path in the wood, and imitate with your lips the squeak of a wild rabbit. Keep perfectly quiet in other respects. You will hear a little rustle under the bracken, and out upon the path will run a weasel or a stoat, come to seize the rabbit by the throat. Hit him on the head with a thick stick. Have you only the fields to fly to? Even here you can get your sport. Larks get up rather as partridges do, and are good practice, and make nice pies. Use small shot for them. Do you want to stalk? Call landrails, either with your mouth, or by scraping the teeth of a comb. They will answer, and thinking it a mate, will run fast through the long grass towards you. Advance upon them with your dog, and then they will get up, and you will get a shot. They will not rise very readily unless a dog puts them up. Otherwise, they *run* in the grass. Here again are flowers; some sorts for hedgerows, and some for cornfields, and some for meadow lands, all differing in character according to the situation. Here, too, you can pursue butterflies, getting your legs wet up to your knees in the blooming fields of clover.

Will the chalk downs be your place of sojourn? There again you will find butterflies—the blues and fritillaries and skippers. There are flowers many, and of peculiar characters: *campanulæ*, gentians, saxifrages, bee orchis and fly orchis, and *habenaria*. There the chalk pits will reward your hammer and chisel with fossils. Or, if you need a rougher sport, this is the country over which to chase a badger. He, with his long hare-like hind legs, gets up-hill very fast, and he has lots of pluck and endurance. He can and will bite severely. Bull terriers should be held in leash to turn him and pull him out of a hedge or thicket in which he may want to escape. There, lastly, you may catch your little birds—chaffinches, goldfinches and

bulfinches, and linnets. In the cold weather you will see flocks of little birds fluttering over the patches of thistles which are scattered over the downs. They are after the seed of the thistle; but this they soon ravage, clearing every stem. Your policy will be to take with you some old thistle-plants in which there is seed still left. Stick these in holes in the turf, and lay your nets round, or use birdlime. The hungry finches will soon find the seed out, and flock down to devour it. Have a bag in which to carry the captives to their cages.

Shall you be by the sea? Shrimp: always remembering to have a net with *no* holes in, and to push your net *against* the flow of the water: *e. g.*, if the tide is coming in, push rather out to sea; if it is going out, meet the shrimps as they come with the stream. Recollect you will catch more shrimps when the water is muddy than when it is clear. Shrimps have eyes, and can run away when they see you. If you have no net, wade among the rocks and catch prawns with your fingers. Are there no rocks? Then dig for sand eels in the damp sand. They are little silvery creatures, who can burrow through the sand quicker than you would think possible. You will find them very quick. Toasted and split on a toasting-fork, and laid on a slice of bread and butter, they are a delicate morsel for a gourmand. Need I remind you that there are sea-weeds to collect, and zoophytes and an aquarium to be stocked? Again, flowers will pursue you to the beach. Quite a new set. Yellow horned poppies, thrifts, sea holly, fennel, and many more. Wherever you are, always be observing; there is always something to observe: even at night you can observe the stars and the formation of the clouds. In your room you can watch the spiders and flies on the window; in your garden the flowers and the bees; and not only the hive bees but the carpenter bee, that comes and carves his semicircular patch out of each of your favourite rose's leaves. This is the creature that, boring into the stump of an old gate post, deposits an egg; it then seals that egg up hermetically in a cell and proceeds to lay another between it and the outside, and so fills up the hole. Hence arises a question for you, Toby. The egg first laid, one would naturally suppose, hatches first. How does he get out without disturbing his younger brethren in front of him?

Well, Toby, I must come to an end somewhere, and here will be as good as anywhere. The moral of all this tale is—observe. It is well worth your while, not only for the knowledge you will

gather, but also for the mental training it gives. The pleasure arising from such practice is immense. You go for an ordinary walk; you cast your eye along the hedges, recognising each flower as an old friend, each butterfly or fly as an old acquaintance. You recognise a favourite singer in the bush by his voice; you associate the greedy suck of trout in the stream with pleasant days and heavy baskets, both in the past and in the future. Nothing presents no interest. Strange things imperatively demand your acquaintance. The mental training you get is a habit of concentration. I see a flower: at once I mentally name it, according to my ability. The ideas connected with it flash instantaneously through my memory. So necessary does the habit of observation become, that not to be allowed to exercise it is painful. Your uncle, my boy, when he was only a little older than you, was taken to Switzerland, and as he crossed the district of the Jura mountains in the train, new flowers, new butterflies passed rapidly before the carriage windows, just slow enough to enable him to glance and guess at their names and families; but the train was inexorable, and the excitement of finding a new plant was given and taken in a breath. Such tantalization is trying. But if you don't become an enthusiast, Toby, your uncle will be satisfied if the hints he has given you only serve to keep you out of mischief.

Your affectionate Uncle.

THE IRON-WOOD TREE AND THE PARASITE.



In the forest, side by side, there stood two iron-wood trees;* the one was tall and sprightly, and upright as an arrow, looking up to the skies with its youthful branches and crown of dark green leaves, a glory to behold; whilst the other was an aged and bent tree, with gnarled stem and angulated branches, which, together with many a yellow leaf and scantily clad twig, formed a striking contrast to the young tree.

"Have you seen the climber that is creeping up my stem?" inquired the young iron-wood tree of her aged and bent companion.—"Have

* *Vepris lanceolata*.

you," continued the young tree, "seen my friend, the spotted climber,* with her handsome semi-transparent stem, covered with elongated purple spots? We have entered into a league; it is our intention to dwell together in the woods; you are aware that 'union is strength,' and our united stems and branches will form a shield against the storms: 'then let the winds howl on,' we shall be to each other a tower of strength; we shall not care for 'winter and rough weather.'"

"My friend," replied the aged and bent tree, "beware of evil companions. In the days of my youth I was tall and stately as yourself, I was not the deformed thing which you now behold; but, unfortunately, I harboured one of these spotted parasites—one of the same plants that is now creeping up your stem—and mark the result. I am prematurely worn and bent with age, my days have been darkened, and I have had no pleasure in them; your friend the climber is fair to look upon, but beware of her treachery; for, like the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' she will cling to you, and, when once established amongst your branches, will cast off the stem which connects her with the earth, by which she now obtains her nourishment, and will become parasitical upon your back; her great weight eventually bowing down your proud head to the low earth. My young friend, beware of the spotted parasite."

The counsel of the aged tree was, however, disregarded, for the treacherous climber, whispering to her friend, said in the most beguiling manner, "Do not believe it! place no faith in such whims and fancies; they have arisen out of envy and jealousy: why should you dwell alone? If we mingle our leaves and branches, and blossom together in the woods, we shall be more beautiful than all the other trees; even *Erythrina* † in all her gorgeous beauty, and the wild chestnut tree, ‡ will sink into insignificance beside us."

In the pride of her heart, the credulous young tree believed in her false friend, and that they might dwell together in the forest, she took to her bosom the purple spotted parasite.

* The spotted parasite, *Cuscuta Cassythoides*. "Parasitical, cord-like, leafless plants, germinating in the soil, but soon attaching themselves by disk-like suckers to the stems of neighbouring plants: when this occurs the primary root withers away, and the parasite henceforth draws its nourishment from the plant to which it has affixed itself."—"Genera of South African Plants."

† *Erythrina Kaffia*.

‡ *Calodendron capense*.

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one of his favourite hymns is that in which the verse occurs which tells of

—“the home for little children

Above the bright blue sky,
Where Jesus reigns in glory,
A home of peace and joy.”

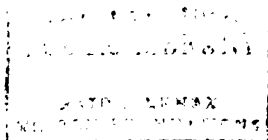
He, too, has many pleasant chats with his companions and near neighbours in the adjoining cots. It is a great blessing to the parents of these and all the poor children that their little ones can be tended with such care, and have all that medical science and skill can do for them. That this *second* cot, supported by “Aunt Judy’s” readers, may be the means of alleviating much pain and weakness, and of prolonging many young lives, is the earnest hope of all who are associated in the good work.

Contributions to the “Aunt Judy’s Magazine Cot,” received to August 15th, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
E. A. C. (every two months)	0	5	0
Oria, Bradbourne Vicarage, Wirksworth (monthly, July and August)	0	1	0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (July and August)	0	2	0
The Black Kitten, Chiddingly Vicarage, Hawkhurst (every other month)	0	0	6
Miss Frederica Williams, Tring Park, Tring (annual)	1	1	0
Susan and Harriet (monthly)	0	2	0
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Carrie, for three months, 6d., Willie, for three months, 6d., School-room fines, 6d.	0	1	6
Four Children, Holmeby Hall, also some comforters, dolls, scrap-books, and some flannel garments made by them- selves (annual)	0	10	0
D. A. Watford (annual)	0	5	0
Fanny Green, The Vicarage, Ormskirk	0	2	0
The Girls at Derby House, Victoria Road, Gipsy Hill, Norwood	2	16	0

	£	s.	d.
Two Little Robins	0	0	4
88, Regent’s Park Road	0	10	6
Ada, Ernest, and Edward Bowyer, Wonham Cottage, near Reigate	0	2	0
Forfeits from a Juvenile Ques- tion Club	0	3	0
Anonymous	0	5	0
Part contents of Edith, Bertie, and Mia’s Money Box	0	1	9
Young Friends at Twyford	0	10	0
The Young Folks at Pencrabar	0	7	0
Mabel, Madeline, and Rosa- mond Birch	0	6	0
Janet Spicer, 31, Belgrave Square	0	2	6
G. M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
Collected by Nora Barker: Lennox, 1s., Frank, 1s., Mollie, 1s. 3d., William, 3d., Stray Pennies, 6s. 6d.	0	10	0
Bertie, George, and Maggie	0	1	3
Maud, for Jane D.	0	0	6
A Fish out of Water, and two Mermaids	0	4	0
Maude and Florrie (collected)	0	4	0
Lilcat	0	2	6
An Hoylake Sea Bird, for Jane D.	0	0	3
Two Maries, Aunt and Niece	0	4	0
A Nurse, a lover of Children	0	2	0
A Birthday Thank-offering	0	3	0
Two Little Birds	0	2	6
Mary, Susan, and Alice Blagg, Greenhill, Cheadle	0	3	0
Mamma, Edith, and Willie	0	1	0
Proceeds of a Bazaar, from E. H. G. and B. B., and the Four Blackberries of Bramble Hill	1	4	0
Edith Vernon, Kirk Ella, Hull	0	8	0
Aunt Prue, Worcester, clothes and toys			
J. M. K. and K. I. R. H., some cards			
“Ormskirk Gingerbread,” a picture-book for Janie			
Four Little Girls, some toys			
Miss Wilson, a scrap-book			
Emily, a scrap-book			
Miss E. M. Trower, a drawing slate and some doll’s clothes			







SIX TO SIXTEEN.

SIX TO SIXTEEN.

CHAPTER XXVII.

EVENTS—MY COUSINS—CULTIVATING THE BEAUTIFUL—ELEANOR'S FIRST
BALL—CAPTAIN M'CRUSTIE.

IT seems to me that my biography is a very uneven performance. I seem to have dwelt so fully on some little things which took a very short time to happen, and to have gone much more rapidly over longer periods. And now I find very little to record of the four or five years which followed that summer when Madame was with us. Unless, indeed, I had had my old diaries to copy from, or were to relate each successive domestic or village incident to the best of my powers without them, which would be much too tedious both for me to write down, and for Eleanor to read.

The truth is, our lives passed in that plenty of occupation and happy peace which yield few striking incidents. I kept up an affectionate correspondence with the Bullers, and Eleanor never quite dropped hers with Madame.

At home, our own studies, the coming and going of the boys, the ups and downs of the parish, were our main subjects of interest. The chief events which broke the monotony of these few years were:

1. Clement took a scholarship, and various other school honours.
2. Poor Jack had a dreadful fever-illness, in which I was chief nurse, owing to a strange half-delirious fancy he took for having me near him.
3. Restoration of the church, and discovery of ecclesiastical antiquities, which made Mr. Arkwright (who was a devoted archaeologist) almost wild, and brought a great many clever, pleasant old gentlemen to the Rectory from time to time. With one or two of these Eleanor struck up lasting friendships and learned correspondences. They were irreverently classed by Jack as "Eleanor's old men." The "fad" of this date was "rubbing brasses."
4. Eleanor undertook the choir.
5. It was discovered that I had a soprano voice, which was considered rather a good one, even here, where voices of good tone and compass are the rule, instead of being, as in most south-country

villages, the too rare exception. Eleanor's voice is a contralto. These were our chief home incidents.

Then, as I said, we paid visits—to relatives of mine, and to old friends of the Arkwrights. My friends invited Eleanor, and Eleanor's friends invited me. People are very kind; and it was understood that we were happier together. I was fortunate enough to find myself possessed of some charming cousins living in a cathedral town; and at their house it was a great pleasure to us to visit. The cathedral services gave us great delight; when I think of the expression of Eleanor's face, I may almost say rapture. Then there was a certain church-bookseller's shop which had manifold attractions for us. Every parochial want that print and paper could supply was there met with; a convenience that bordered on luxury. There was a good store, too, of sacred prints, illuminated texts, and oak frames, from which we carried back sundry additions to the garnishing of our room, besides presents for Jack, who was as fond of such things as we were. Parish matters were, naturally, of perennial interest for us in our Rectory home; but if ever they became a fad, it was about this period.

But it was to a completely new fad that this visit finally led us, which I hardly know how to describe, unless as the fad of dressmaking and general ornamentation.

The neighbourhood abounded with pretty clerical and country homes, where my cousins were intimate; each one, so it seemed to Eleanor and me, prettier than the last: sunshiny and homelike, with irregular comfortable furniture, dainty with chintz, or dark with aged oak: old china, new books, music, sketches, needlework, and flowers everywhere, arranged with exquisite taste and variety.

"Do you know, Eleanor," said I, "I don't think we're houseproud at home. And women ought to be houseproud, I think. Our villagers are supposed to be, but I don't think we are at the Rectory. Of course we are as to cleanliness; Keziah takes care of that; but I mean over little tasteful, pretty refinements. It certainly, perhaps, is rather a waste of time arranging all these vases and baskets of flowers every day, but they are *very* nice to look at, and I think it civilizes one."

"*You're* not to blame," said Eleanor, decisively. "*You're* south-country to the backbone, and French on the top. It is we hard north-country folk, so busy foying at our fads; we working-classes—I always feel myself a working woman in half my sympathies, and in all

my energies—we business people, who neglect to cultivate ‘the beautiful.’ We’re quite wrong. But I think the beautiful is revenged on us,” added she, with one of her quick, bright looks, “by withdrawing itself. There’s nothing comparable for ugliness to the people of a manufacturing town.”

My mind was running on certain very ingenious and tasteful methods of hanging nosegays on the wall.

“Those baskets with ferns and flowers in, against the wall, were lovely, weren’t they?” said I. “Do you think we shall ever be able to think of such pretty things?”

“We’re not fools,” said Eleanor, briefly. “We shall do it when we set our minds to it. Meantime, we must make notes of whatever strikes us.”

“There are plenty of jolly old-fashioned flowers in the garden,” said I. It was a polite way of expressing my inward regret that we had no tropical orchids or strange stove plants. And Eleanor danced round me, and improvised a song, beginning—

“There are ferns by Ewden’s waters,
And heather on the hill.”

From the better adornment of the Rectory to the better adornment of ourselves was a short stride. Most of the young ladies in these country homes were very prettily dressed. Not à la Mrs. Perowne. Not in that milliner’s handbook style dear to “Promenades,” and places of public resort; but more daintily, and with more attention to the prettiest and most convenient of the prevailing fashions than Eleanor’s and my costumes displayed.

The toilettes of one young lady in particular won our admiration; and when we learned that her pretty things were made by herself, an overwhelming ambition seized upon us to learn to do the same.

“Women ought to know about all house matters,” said Eleanor, puckering her brow to a gloomy extent. “Dressmaking, cookery, and all that sort of thing; and we know nothing about any of them. I was thinking only last night, in bed, that if I were cast away on a desert island, and had to make a dress out of an old sail, I shouldn’t have the ghost of an idea where to begin.”

“I should,” said I. “I should sew it up like a sack, make three holes for my head and arms, and tie it round my waist with ship’s

rope. I could manage Robinson Crusoe dresses; it's the civilized ones that will be too much for me, I'm afraid."

"I believe the sail would go twice as far if we could gore it," said Eleanor, laughing. "But there's no waste like the wastefulness of ignorance; and oh, Margery, its the *gores* I'm afraid of! If skirts were only made the old-fashioned way, like a flannel petticoat! So many pieces all alike—run them together—hem the bottom—gather the top—and there you are, with everything straightforward but the pocket."

To our surprise we found that our new fad was a sore subject with Mrs. Arkwright. She reproached herself bitterly with having given Eleanor so little training in domestic arts. But she had been brought up by a learned uncle who considered needlework a waste of time, and she knew as little about gores as we did. She had also, unfortunately, known or heard of some excellent mother who had trained nine daughters to such perfection of domestic capabilities that it was boasted that they could never in after life employ a workwoman or domestic who would know more of her business than her employer. And this good lady was a standing trouble to poor Mrs. Arkwright's conscience.

Her self-reproaches were needless. General training is perhaps quite as good (if not better than) special, even for special ends. In giving us a higher education, in teaching us to use our eyes, our wits, and our common sense, she had put all meaner arts within our grasp when need should urge, and opportunity serve.

"Aunt Theresa was always dressing," I said to Eleanor, "but I don't remember anything that would help us. I was so young, you know. And then when one is young one is so stupid, one really resists information."

I was to have another chance, however, of gleaning hints from Aunt Theresa.

The Bullers came home again, and were sent to Ireland, and as Aunt Theresa said, "as soon as ever she was settled" she sent for Eleanor and me. There was no idea of my remaining permanently. It was only a visit.

The major (but he was a colonel now) and his wife were very little changed. The girls, of course, had altered greatly, and so had I. Maria was a fashionably-dressed young lady, with a slightly frail

appearance at times, as if Nature were still revenging the old mismanagement and neglect.

It did not need Aunt Theresa to tell us that she was her father's favourite daughter. But it was no capricious favouritism, I am sure. I believe Colonel Buller to have been one of those people whose hearts have depths of tenderness that are never sounded. The Bush House catastrophe had long ago been swept into the lumber-room of Aunt Theresa's memory, but the tender self-reproach of Maria's father was still to be seen in all his care and indulgence of her.

"He'll take me anywhere," said Maria, with affectionate pride. "He even goes shopping with me."

We liked Maria by far the best of the girls. Partly, no doubt, because she was our old friend, but partly, I think, because intimacy with her father had developed the qualities she inherited from him, and softened others.

To our great satisfaction we discovered that gores were no enigma to Maria, and she and Aunt Theresa good-naturedly undertook to initiate us into the mysteries of dressmaking.

There was an excellent opportunity. Eleanor was now eighteen, and Maria seventeen years old. Maria was to go to her first ball in Dublin, and Mrs. Arkwright consented to let Eleanor "come out" on the same occasion. Hence ball dresses, and hence also our opportunity for learning how to make them.

The Bullers' drawing-room was divided by folding-doors, and both divisions now overflowed with tarlatan and trimmings; but at every fresh inroad of callers (and they were not less frequent than of old) we young ones, and yards of flounces and finery with us, were swept by Aunt Theresa into the back drawing-room, like autumn leaves before a breeze.

The dresses were very successful, and so was the ball. I was so anxious to hear how Eleanor had sped, that I felt quite sure that I could not go to sleep, and that it was a farce to go to bed just when she was beginning to dance. I went, however, at last, and had had half a night's sound sleep before rustling, and chattering, and the light from bed-candles woke me to hear the news.

Maria was looking pale, and somewhat dishevelled, and a great deal of the costume at which we had laboured was reduced to rags. Eleanor's dress was intact, and she herself looked perfectly fresh,

partly because she had resisted, with great difficulty, the extreme length of train then fashionable, and partly from a sort of general compactness which seems a natural gift with some people. Poor Maria had nearly fainted after one of the dances, and had brought away a violent headache; but she declared that she had enjoyed herself, and would have stayed to relate her adventures, but Colonel Buller would not allow it, and sent her to bed. Eleanor slept with me, so our gossip was unopposed, except by warnings.

I set fire to my hair in the effort to decipher the well-filled ball card, but we put it out, and the candle also, and chatted in bed.

"You must have danced every dance," I said, admiringly.

"We sat out one or two that are down," said Eleanor; "and No. 21 was supper, but I danced all the rest."

"There was one man you danced several times with," I said, "but I couldn't make out his name. It looks as if it began with a G."

"Oh, it's not his real name," said Eleanor. "It's the one he says you used to call him by. One thing why I liked him, Margery dear, was because he said he had been so fond of you. You were such a dear little thing, he said. I told him the locket and chain were in good preservation."

"Was it Mr. George?" I cried, with so much energy, that Aunt Theresa (who slept next door) heard us, and knocked on the wall to bid us go to sleep.

"We're just going to," Eleanor shouted, and added in lower tones, to me, "Yes, it was Captain Abercrombie. Maria says he used to be very harum-scarum, but he 'turned good,' and is very good now. He seems clever, too, and Colonel Buller says he's a splendid soldier. And he is so delightfully fond of dancing: I had some jolly chats with him. Then there was Mr. O'Brien, a very handsome little Irishman, who dances splendidly, and he is amusing, Margery. He kept me in fits of laughing; and so very courteous and gentle too. But he does tell shocking stories! Sells, you know, to take one in. He told me all kinds of military stories, because he found out I knew nothing about soldiers. He worked me up into quite a rage about the awful punishments he pretended were inflicted. Wasn't it a shame? But that was not so bad as his telling me that Captain M'Crustie had got a very fat wife and six children, and was a devoted father, but rather strict, and too fond of caning his boys."

"Who's Captain M'Crustie?" I asked; "and did you dance with him?"

"Yes. He asked me several times, and I'm sure I don't know why, for he was so cross and captious when I did. Quite rude, sometimes. I can't think why he didn't stick to the Misses St. Quentin."

"Did he dance a great deal with them?" I asked.

"Well, no, he didn't. But he said he liked them so very much. They were so thoroughly feminine, he said, and he disliked women who mimicked men. But, oh, Eleanor! he reminded me, whether in dress, or slang, or studies, several times of Clem in his way of talking; growling and hitting out, you know, all along. Sulky if one refused to argue, and then cross if one didn't come round to his views; and whenever he had the worst of the discussion, falling back on some general remark against women. He asked me five times, and he danced very badly; and I believe it was for nothing but to carry on the argument because I hadn't given in. I did give him three dances, and the second time I had got quite into the way of managing him. He smiled lots of times, and his face looks utterly different when he smiles."

"How did you manage him?" I anxiously inquired, finding Eleanor's narrative quite as entertaining as a novel. She laughed.

"Well, I really took to fighting with his own weapons. When he bullied me, I bullied him. I never could do it with Clem, of course, because boys won't stand it from their sisters; but I believe it would do him a world of good if somebody who wasn't his sister 'tackled' him that way. You know, I believe, if an Irishman was cross to one, that if one were meek and pathetic it would bring him to his knees in a minute—Irish people are so emotional. But a Scotchman would only hit the harder. When he took me back to Mrs. Buller after our second dance, he said we must have another as we'd got on so well, and that he knew he was a bear, and so on. But he's not exactly bearish, only he reminded me of the old kitchen poker at home. Keziah says it takes 'such a sight of scrubbing with sand-paper to keep it smooth;' and I'm sure the more you rub him the brighter he shines. Do you know, I blurted that about the sand-paper and the poker out to him, and I thought afterwards how rude it was, but he only laughed most good-humouredly. Then I was obliged to give him another dance to make up, and then we quarrelled worse than ever."

"Why—what about?" I asked.

"Well, it was that silly Mr. O'Brien. At least, I was silly for saying anything to him about Captain McCrustie, only it was just for talking' sake. I said something about his being so fond of contradicting, and Mr. O'Brien said, 'Oh, that's the height of compliment from a Scotchman,' and he quoted some old proverb—'fighting and scartin, is Scots folks cartin.' Well, Captain McCrustie was quite on the other side of the room, with his back to us, but I'm sure he heard. How, I can't conceive. He must have eyes in his back, and ears everywhere. And he turned round and gave Mr. O'Brien such a scowl. I couldn't have imagined anybody's face could have looked so awful. Do you remember the horseshoe frown in Red Gauntlet? But you can have no idea what he looked like. Perfectly murderous! And Mr. O'Brien has evidently got a very 'short' temper, as we say. And he got red in an instant, and said, in the suavest of tones, but very loud, how curious it was that certain races should have such long ears."

"I think he said very impertinent things," said I.

"Oh, I know he did," said Eleanor; "but they sound worse when anybody else says them. Irishmen don't seem able to hold their tongues if there's a repartee on the tip. Well! Captain McCrustie never moved at that, though he must have heard, and in three minutes Mr. O'Brien was cool again, and telling me what a good—'grand' he called him—fellow 'McCrustie' was. Then came my dance with Captain McCrustie, and he abused Mr. O'Brien so—calling him a puppy, and making all kinds of bitter skits at Irishmen, that, for fairness' sake, I took up his cudgels; and then, as usual, Captain McCrustie fell back on saying things about women, what kind of men women liked, and so on, and that made me angry, and we parted in a storm."

"Were all the gentlemen quarrelsome?" I asked, amazedly.

"Oh, my dear, no! Most of them were as stupid as owls. And Captain Abercrombie was so nice. I mean, neither rude like Captain McCrustie, nor silly like Mr. O'Brien. And why I like him was, because of his being connected with you."

Eleanor said this so emphatically that another knock came on the wall, and we were warned that it was nearly breakfast-time. I felt most interest, for my own part, in the Scotchman (I have Scotch blood in me, which lives for ever), and being at an age when one judges chiefly by looks, I said, "What is Captain McCrustie like?"

"Well, he's ugly in a way," said Eleanor; "and yet, just about the time that one is getting tired of Mr. O'Brien's neat features and bright eyes, and his jokes and compliments, one begins to get interested in Captain McCrustie's queer ways, and to see that his face is something more than handsome when he smiles. But Captain Abercrombie is quite different. It is no effort to talk to him, and one never thinks about his looks, he's so nice, and so fond of dogs, and of you, Margery."

"Shall I see him?" I asked.

"Oh yes," said Eleanor. "He's going to call to-morrow, I know, and very likely the Irishman too. But Captain McCrustie is going on leave."

"Girls! girls!" cried Aunt Theresa. And we went to sleep.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

CUTTING OUT—MISS LINING THE DRESSMAKER ON GORES—THE VINE ONCE MORE—THE LAST DAYS OF MY GREAT-GRANDPARENTS.

SOON after we returned from our visit to the Bullers, Eleanor and I resolved to prove the extent of the benefit we had reaped from Aunt Theresa's instructions by making ourselves some dresses of an inexpensive stuff that we bought for the purpose.

How well I remember the pattern! A flowering creeper, which followed a light stem upwards through yard after yard of the material. We had picked to pieces certain old bodies which fitted us fairly, and our first work was to lay these patterns upon the new stuff, with weights on them, and so to cut out our new bodies as easily as Maria (whose directions we were following) had prophesied that we should. When these and the sleeves were accomplished (and they looked most business-like), we began upon the skirts. We cut the back and the front breadths, and duly "sloped" the latter. Then came the gores. We folded the breadths into three parts: we took a third at one end, and two thirds at the other, and folded the slope accordingly. It became quite exciting.

"Who would have thought it was so easy?" said I.

Eleanor was almost prone upon the table, cutting the gore with large scissors which made a quite sempstress-like squeak. "The higher education fades from my view with every snip," she said, laughing. "Upon my word, Margery, I begin to believe this sort of

thing is our vocation. It is great fun, and there is absolutely no brain wear and tear."

The gores were parted as she spoke, and (to do us justice) were exactly the shape of the tarlatan ones that Aunt Theresa had cut. But when we came to put them together they wouldn't fit without turning one of them the wrong side out. Eleanor had boasted too soon. We got headaches and backaches with stooping and puzzling. We cut up all our stuff, but the gores remained obstinate. By no ingenuity could we combine them so as to be at once in proper order, the right side out, and the right side (of the pattern) up. I really think we cried over them with weariness and disappointment.

"Algebra's a trifle to it," was poor Eleanor's conclusion.

I went out to clear my brain by a walk, and happening, as I returned, to meet Jack, I confided our woes to him. One could tell Jack anything.

"You've got it wrong somehow," said Jack, "linking" me. "Come to Miss Lining's."

Miss Lining was our village dressmaker. A very had one, but still she could gore a skirt. She was not a native of the village, and signified her superior gentility by a mincing pronunciation. She had also a hiss with the sibilants peculiar to herself. Before I could remonstrate, Jack was knocking at the door.

"Good-afternoon, Miss Lining. Miss Margery has been making a dress, and she's got into a muddle with the gores. Now, how do you manage with gores, Miss Lining?" Jack cheerfully inquired, taking his hat off, and accepting a well-dusted chair. There was now nothing for it but to explain my difficulties, which I did, Miss Lining saying "Yiss, miss" at every two or three words. When I had said my say, she sucked the top of her brass thimble thoughtfully for some moments, and then spoke as an oracle.

"There's a hinside and a hout to the stuff? Yiss, miss. And a hup and a down? Yiss, miss."

"And quite half the gores won't fit in anywhere," I desperately interposed. Miss Lining took another taste of the brass thimble, and then said, "In course, miss, with a patterned thing there's as many gores to throw hout as to huse. Yiss, miss."

"Are there?" said I. "But what a waste!"

"Ho, no, miss! you cuts the body out of the gores you throws hout, miss——"

"Well, if you get the body out of them, there must be a waist!" Jack broke in, as he sat fondling Miss Lining's tom cat.

"Ho, no, sir!" said Miss Lining, who couldn't have seen a joke, to save her dignity. "They cuts to good add-vantage, sir."

The mystery was now clear to me, and Jack saw this by my face.

"You twig?" said he briefly, setting down the cat.

"Quite," said I. "Our mistake was beginning with the bodies, but we can get some more stuff."

"An odd bit always comes in," said Miss Lining, speaking, I fear, from an experience of bits saved from the dresses of village patrons. "Yiss, miss."

"Well, good-afternoon Miss Lining," said Jack, who never suffered, as Eleanor and I sometimes did, from a difficulty in getting away from a cottage; "thank you very-much. Have you heard from your sister at Buxton lately?"

"Last week, sir," said Miss Lining.

"And how is she?" said Jack, urbanely.

He never forgot any one, and he never grudged sympathy: two qualities which made him beloved of the village.

"Quite well, thank you, sir, and the same to you," said Miss Lining, beaming; "except that she do suffer a deal in her inside, sir."

"Chamomile tea is very good for the inside, I believe," said Jack, putting on his hat with perfect gravity.

"So I've 'eerd; yiss, sir," said Miss Lining; "and there's something of the same in them pills that's spoke sq well of in your magazine, sir. I think I sent by the carrier for a box, sir, on Saturday last, and would have done sooner, but for waiting for Mrs. Barker to pay for the pelerine I made her out of her uncle's funeral scarf. Yiss, miss."

Jack was very seldom at a loss, but on this occasion he seemed puzzled. "Pills recommended in our magazine?" he said, as we strolled up towards the Vicarage. "It's those medical tracts you and Eleanor have been taking round lately."

"There's nothing about pills in them," said I; "they're about drains, and fresh air, and cleanliness. Besides, she said our magazine."

"We don't give them any magazine but the 'Parishioners' Penny-worth,' and the missionary one," said Jack. "I'm stumped, Margery."

But in a few minutes I was startled by his seizing me by the shoulders, and leaning against me in a paroxysm of laughter.

"Oh, Margery, I've got it! It is the 'Parishioners' Pennyworth.' There's an advertisement been at the end of it for months, like a fly-leaf, of Norton's chamomile pills."

And as I unravelled to Eleanor the mystery of our dressmaking difficulties, we could hear Jack convulsing Mrs. Arkwright with a perfect reproduction of Miss Lining's accent—"Them pills that's spoke so well of in your magazine. Yiss, m'm."

We got some more material, and finished the dresses triumphantly. By the next summer we were skilful enough to use our taste with some freedom and good success.

I was then fifteen, and in long dresses. I remember some most tasteful costumes which we produced, and as we contemplated them, as they hung, flounced, furbelowed, and finished, upon pegs, Eleanor said, "I wonder where we shall display these this year!"

How little we knew! How far we were from guessing that the dresses we had made alike to the nicety of a bow (because we thought it ladylike for sisters to be dressed alike) were not to be worn together!

About this time Mr. Arkwright got a letter from one of my relations on the subject of my going to live with my great-grandfather and grandmother. They were now very old. My great-grandfather was becoming "childish," and the dear little duchess was old and frail for such a charge alone. They had no daughter. The religious question was laid aside. My most Protestant relatives thought my duty in the matter overwhelming, and with all my clinging of heart to the moor home I felt myself that it was so.

I don't know how I got over the parting. I wandered hopelessly about familiar spots; and wished I had made sketches of them; but how could I know I had not all life before me? The time was short, and preparations had to be made. This kept us quiet. At the last, Jack put in all my luggage, and did everything for me. Then he kissed me, and said, "God bless you, Margery," and "linking" Eleanor by force, led her away and comforted her like the good, dear boy he was. And Clem drove me so recklessly down the steep hill, and over the stones, that the momentary expectation of an upset dried my tears, and I did not see much of the villagers' kind and too touching farewells.

And so to the bleak station again, and the familiar old porter, whom

fate seemed to leave long enough at *his* post, and on through the whirling railway panorama, by which one passes to so much joy and so much sorrow—and then I was at the Vine once more.

I wonder if I am like my great-grandmother in her youth? Some people (Elspeth among them) declare that it is so; and others that I am like my poor mother. I suppose I have some Vandaleur features from an eerie little incident which befel me on the threshold of the Vine; an appropriate beginning to a life that always felt like a weird, shadowy dream.

I did not ring the bell of the outer gate on my arrival, because Adolphe (grown up, but with the old, ruddy boy's face on the top of his man's shoulders) was anxiously waiting for me, and devoted himself to my luggage, telling me that master was in the garden. Thither I ran so hastily, that a straggling sweetbriar caught my hat and my net, and dragged them off, sending my hair over my shoulders. My hair is not long, however, like Eleanor's, and it curls, and I sometimes wear it loose, so I did not stop to rearrange it, but hurried on towards my great-grandfather, who was coming slowly to meet me from the other end of the terrace, his hands behind his back, as of old. At least, I thought it was to meet me; but as he came near I saw that he was unconscious of my presence. He looked very old, his face was very white and shrivelled, like a crumpled white kid glove; his wild blue eyes, insensible to what was before them, seemed intently fixed on something that no one else could see, and he was talking to himself as we call it, when folk talk with the invisible. It was very silly, but I really felt the colour fading from my face with fright. My great-grandfather's back was to the west, where a few bars of red across the sky, as it was to be seen through the Scotch firs, were all that remained of the sunset. That strange light was on everything, of which pre-Raphaelite painters are so foud. I was tired with my long journey and previous excitement; and when I suddenly remembered that Mr. Vandaleur was said to have in some measure lost his reason, a shudder came over me. In a moment more he saw me. I think my crimson cloak caught his eye, but his welcome was hardly less alarming than his abstraction. He started, and held up his hands, and a pained, puzzled expression troubled his face. Then a flush, which seemed to make him look older than the whiteness; and then, with a shrill, feeble cry of "*Victoire, ma belle!*" he tottered towards me, so hastily

that I thought he must have fallen; but, like a vision, a little figure flitted from the French window of the drawing-room, and in a moment my great-grandmother was supporting him, and soothing him with gentle words in French. I could see now how helpless he was. For a bit he seemed still puzzled and confused; but he clung to her and kissed her hand, and suffered himself to be led indoors. Then I followed them, through the window, into the room, where the candles were not yet lighted for economy's sake; the glare of the red sunset bars making everything dark to me, with a strange sense of gloom.

It would be hard to imagine a stronger contrast than that between my life in my new home and my life in my home upon the moors. At the Arkwrights we lived so essentially with the times. Our politics, on the whole, were liberal; our theology inclined to be broad; our ideas on social subjects were reformatory, progressive, experimental. Scientific subjects were a speciality of the household; and, living in a manufacturing district, mere neighbourhood kept us with the great current of mercantile interests. We argued each other into a general unfixedness of opinions; and, full of youthful dreams of golden ages, were willing to believe this young world—where not yet we, but only our words could fly—to be but upon the threshold of true civilization. Above all, life seemed so short, our hands were so full, so overfull of work, the daylight was not long enough for us; and we grudged meals and sleep.

And how different it was under the shadow of this old Vine! I am very thankful, now, that I had grace, under the sense of "wasted time," which was at first so irritating, to hold by my supreme child-duty towards my aged parents against the mere modern fuss of "work," against what John Wesley called the "lust of finishing" any labour, and to serve them in their way rather than in my own. But the change was very great. How we "pottered" through the days!—with what needless formalities, what slowness, what indecision! How fatiguing is enforced idleness! How lengthy were the evening meals, where we sat, trifling with the vine leaves under a single dish of fruit, till the gloaming deepened into gloom!

At fifteen one is very susceptible of impressions; very impatient of what one is not used to. The very four-post bed in which I slept oppressed me, and the cracked basin held together for years by the circular hole in the old-fashioned wash-stand. The execution

picture only made me laugh now. Then, as to the meals. No doubt a great many people eat and drink too much, as we are beginning to discover. Whether we at the Vicarage did, I cannot say; but the change to the unsubstantial fare on which very old people like the Vandaleurs keep the flickering light of life aglow was considerable; and yet in this slow, vegetating existence my appetite soon died away. The country was flat, and damp too; and by-and-by neuralgia kept me awake at night, as regularly as the ghost of my great-grandfather had done in years gone by. But it is strange how quickly unmarked time slips on. Day after day, week after week, ran by, till a lassitude crept over me in which I felt amazed at former ambitions, and a certain facility of sympathy, which has been in many respects an evil, and in many a good to me, seemed to mould me to the interests of the fading household. And so I lived the life of my great-grandparents, which was as if science made no strides, and men no struggles; as if nothing were to be done with the days, but to wear through them in all patient goodness, loyal to a long-fallen dynasty, regretful of some ancient virtues and courtesies, tender towards past beauties and passions, and patient of succeeding sunsets, till this aged world should crumble to its close.

My great-grandfather came to know me again, though his mind was in a disordered, dreary condition; from old age, Elspeth said; but it often recalled what I had heard of the state of his mother's intellect before her death. The dear little old lady's intellects were quite bright, and happily, not only entire, but cultivated. I do not know how people who think babies and servants are a woman's only legitimate interests would like to live with women who have either never met with, or long outlived them. I know how my dear granny's educated mind and sense of humour helped us over a dozen little domestic difficulties, and broke the neck of fidgets that seemed almost inevitable at her great age, and in that confined sphere of interests.

I certainly faded in our twilight existence, as if there were some truth in the strange old theory that very aged people can withdraw vital force from young companions and live upon it. But every day and hour of my stay made me love and reverence my great-grandmother more and more, and be more and more glad that I had come to know her, and perhaps be of some little service to her.

Indeed, it was my poor grandfather's condition that kept us so much among the shadows. The old lady had a delightful youthfulness of spirit, and took an almost wistful pleasure in hearing about our life at the Arkwrights', as if some ambitious Scotch blood in her would fain have kept better pace with the currents of the busy world. But when my grandfather joined us, we had to change the subject. Modern ideas jarred upon him. And it was seldom that he was not with us. The tender love between the old couple was very touching.

"It must seem strange to you, my dear, to think of such long lives so little broken by events," said my great-grandmother. "But your dear grandfather and I have never been apart for a day since our happy marriage."

I do not think they were apart for an hour whilst I was with them. He followed her about the house, if she left him for many minutes, crying, "Victoire! Victoire!" chiefly from love, but I was sometimes spiteful enough to think also because he could not amuse himself.

"The master's calling for you again," said Elspeth, with some impatience, one day when grandmamma was teaching me a bit of dainty cookery in the kitchen.

"Oh, fly, petite!" she cried to me, "and say that his majesty has summoned the duchess."

Much bewildered, I ran out, and met my great-grandfather on the terrace, crying, "Victoire! Victoire!" in fretful tones.

"His majesty has summoned the duchess, sir," said I, dropping a slight courtesy, as I generally did on disturbing the old gentleman.

To my astonishment, this seemed quite to content him. He drew in his elbows, and spread the palms of his hands with a very polite bow, saying, "Bien, bien," and after murmuring something else in French, which I did not catch, but which I fancy was an acknowledgment of the prior claims of royalty, he folded his hands behind his back and wandered away down the terrace, as I rushed off to my confectionery again.

I found that this use of the old fable, which had calmed my great-grandmother in past days, was no new idea. It was in fact a graceful fiction which deceived nobody, and had been devised by my great-grandmother out of deference to her husband's prejudices. In the long years when they were very poor, their poverty was made, not only tolerable, but graceful, by Mrs. Vandaleur's untiring energy,

but (though he wouldn't, or perhaps couldn't, find any occupation by which to add to their income) the sight of his Victoire, who should have been a duchess, doing any menial work so distracted him, that my grandmother had to devise some method to secure herself from his observation when she washed certain bits of priceless lace which redeemed her old dresses from commonness, or cooked some delicacy for Mons. le Duc's dinner, or mended her honourable clothes. So Jeanette's old fable came into use; first in jest, and then as an adopted form for getting rid of my great-grandfather when he was in the way. It must have astonished a practical woman like my great-grandmother to find how completely it satisfied him. But there must have been a time when his helplessness and impracticability tried her in many ways, before she fairly came to realise that he never could be changed, and her love fell in with his humours. On this point he was humoured completely, and never inquired on what business his deceased majesty of France required the attendance of the duchess that should have been!

To do him justice, if he was a helpless, he was a very tender husband.

"He has never said a rude or an unkind word to me since we were boy and girl together," said the little old lady, with tears in her eyes. And, indeed, courtesy implies self-discipline; and even now the old man's politeness checked his petulance over and over again. He never gave up the habit of gathering flowers for my grandmother, and such exquisite contrasts of colour I never saw combined by any other hand. Another accomplishment of his was also connected with his love of plants.

"It's little enough a man can do about a house the best of times," said Elspeth, "and the master's just as feckless as a bairn. But he makes a fine sallet."

I shudder almost as I write the words. How little we thought that my poor grandfather's one useful gift would have so fatal an ending!

But I must put it down in order. It was the end of many things. Of my life at the Vine among them, and very nearly of my life in this world altogether. My great-grandfather made delicious salads. I have heard him say that he preferred our English habit of mixing ingredients to the French one of dressing one vegetable by itself, but, he

said, we did not carry it far enough; we neglected so many useful herbs. And so his salads were compounded not only of lettuce and cress, and so forth, but of dandelion, sorrel, and half a dozen other field or garden plants. Sometimes one flavour preponderated, sometimes another, and the sauce was always good.

Now it is all over, it seems to me that I must have been very stupid not to have paid more attention to the strange flavour in the salad that day. But I was thinking chiefly of the old lady, who was not very well (Elspeth had an idea that she had had a very slight "stroke," but how this was we cannot know now), whilst my grandfather was almost flightily cheerful. I tasted the salad, and did not eat it, and was the less inclined to complain of it as they seemed perfectly satisfied.

Then my grandmother was taken ill. At first we thought it a development of what we had noticed. Then Mr. Vandaleur became ill also, and we sent Adolphe in haste for the doctor. At last we found out the truth. The salad was full of young leaves of monkshood. Under what delusion my poor grandfather had gathered them we never knew. Elspeth and I were busy with the old lady, and he had made the salad without help from any one.

From the first the doctor gave us little hope, and they sank rapidly. Their priest, for whom Adolphe made a second expedition, did not arrive in time; they were in separate rooms, and Elspeth and I flitted from one to the other in sad attendance. The dear little old lady sank fast, and died in the evening.

Then the doctor impressed on us the necessity of keeping her death from my great-grandfather's knowledge.

"But supposing he asks?" said I.

"Say any soothing thing your ready wit may suggest, my dear young lady. But the truth, in his present condition, would be a fatal shock."

It haunted me. "Supposing he asks." And late in the evening he did ask! I was alone with him, and he called me.

"Marguerite, dear child, thou wilt tell me the truth. Why does my wife, my Victoire, thy grandmother, not come to me?"

Pondering what lie I could tell him, and how, an irresistible impulse seized me. I bent over him and said,

"Dear sir, the king has summoned the duchess." Does the mind regain power as the body fails? My great-grandfather turned his

head, and, as his blue eyes met mine, I could not persuade myself that he was deceived.

"The will of His Majesty be done," he said faintly, but firmly.

The next few moments seemed like years. Had I done wrong? Had it done him harm? Above all, what did he mean? Were his words part of one last graceful dream of the dynasty of the white lilies, or was his loyal submission made now to a Majesty not of France, not even of this world? It was an intense relief to me when he spoke again.

"Marguerite!"

I knelt by the bedside, and he laid his hand upon my head. An exquisite smile shone on his face.

"Good child; pauvre petite! His Majesty will call me also, before long. Is it not so? And then thou shalt rest."

His fine face clouded again with a wandering, troubled look, and his fingers fumbled the bed-clothes. I saw that he had lost his crucifix in moving his hand to my head. I gave it him once more, and he clasped his hand over it, and carrying it to his lips with a smile, closed his eyes like some good child going to sleep.

And Thou, oh King of kings, didst summon him, as the dark faded into dawn!

CHAPTER XXIX.

HOME AGAIN.—HOME NEWS.—THE VERY END.

Now it is past it seems like a dream, my life at the Vine and its sad end. If indeed it could be justly called a sad end which took away together, and with little pain, those dear souls whose married life had not known the parting of a day, and who in death were not (even by a day) divided.

And so I went back to the moors. I was weak and ill when I started, but every breath of air on my northward journey seemed to bring strength.

There are no events in that porter's life, I am convinced. He looked just the same, and took me and my boxes quite coolly, though I felt inclined to shake hands with him in my delight. I did cry for very joy as we toiled up the old sandy hill, and the great moors welcomed me back. Then came the church, then the Vicarage, with the union-jack out of my window, and the villagers were at their doors—and I was at home. Oh, how the dear boys tore me to pieces!

There was no very special news, it seemed. Clement had been very good in taking my class at school, and had established a cricket club.

Jack had positively found a new fungus, which would probably be named after him. "Boy's luck," as we all said! Captain Abercrombie had been staying with an old uncle at a place close by, only about twelve miles off. And he was constantly driving over. "So very good-natured to the boys," Mr. Arkwright said. And there was to be a school-children's tea on my birthday.

My birthday has come and gone, and I am sixteen now. Dear old Eleanor and I have gone back to our old ways. She had left my side of our room untouched. It was in talking of our recent parting, and all that has come and gone in our lives, that the fads came upon us of writing our biographies this winter.

And here, in the dear old kitchen, round which the wild wind howls like music, with the dear boys dreaming at our feet, we bring them to an end.

* * * * *

This dusty relic of an old fad had been lying by for more than a year, when I found it to-day, in emptying a box to send some books in to Oxford, to Jack.

Eleanor should have had it, for we are parted, after all; but her husband has more interest in hers, so we each keep our own.

She is married, to George Abercrombie, and I mean to paste the bit out of the newspaper account of their wedding on to the end of this, as a sort of last chapter. It would be as long as all the rest put together if I were to write down all the ups and downs, and ins and outs, that went before the marriage, and I suppose these things are always very much alike.

I like him very much, and I am going to stay with them. The wedding was very pretty. Captain McCrustie was George's best man, and so I was with him as first bridesmaid, and he didn't growl at me at all. Clement had Maria Buller. He had been very sulky about the engagement, and then suddenly cleared up, and has been jolly ever since. He had got into some muddle, too, and thought I was going to marry "Mr. George." Jack threw shoes to such an extent, that when I went to change my white ones I couldn't find a complete pair to put on. He says he meant to pick them up again, but our new puppy thought they were thrown for him, and he never brought them back. Dear boy!

The old uncle helps George, who I believe is his heir, but at present he sticks to the regiment. It seems so funny that Eleanor should

now be living there, and I here. In her letter to-day she says: "Fancy, Margery, my having quarrelled with Mrs. Minchin and not known it! She called on me to-day and solemnly forgave me, whereby I learned that she had been 'cutting' me for six weeks. When she said: 'No doubt you thought it very strange, Mrs. Abercrombie, that I never called on your mother whilst she was with you,' I was obliged to get over it the best way I could, for I dare not tell her I had never noticed it. I think my offence was something about calls, and I must be more particular. But George and I have been sketching at every spare moment this lovely weather. Oh, Margery dear, I do often feel so thankful to the mother for having given us plenty of rational interests. I could really imagine even *our* quarrelling or getting tired of each other, if we had nothing but ourselves in common. As it is, you can't tell, till you have a husband of your own, what a double delight there is in everything we do together. As to social ups and downs, and not having much money or fine dresses, a 'collection' alone makes one almost too indifferent. Do you remember the mother's saying long ago, that intellectual pleasures have this in common with the consolations of religion, that they are such as the world can neither give nor take away?"

THE END.

THE BURN IN THE SUMMER NIGHT.



RIGHT moonlight downward shining
 Glanced on the pebbly burn,
 With every eddy dancing,

Dancing at every turn:

Blithely the burn was singing,

As it rippled on the strand,

A happy story bringing

From the sleeping upper-land.

It sang of marshes where at night

Long strings of wild-fowl pass,

Where the summer winds play midst the nodding tufts

Of fleecy cotton-grass,

And where through mosses deep

Its younger self doth creep,

Living, yet half asleep.

And of deep woods it sang,
Where, at the summer noon,
No stray breeze cometh, nor at night
The shimmer of the moon—
But silence, silence, silence,
Broodeth by night and day,
Save when the cushat cooeth
On the tall pine's topmost spray,
Rocking and rocking to and fro
On winds that never breathe below.
And of wide heaths it told,
Long rolling swathes of purple heather,
Whence, from furze coverts, flakes of gold
Are blown about in windy weather;
And where the plovers, wheeling in the sky,
Utter their wild and weird, and plaintive cry.
It told of rustic bridges, too,
Where lingering lovers lean—
Two twining figures blent in one,
As in a mirror seen.
And of quiet hamlets sang the burn—
Hamlets that rise beside the brink
Of pebbly shallows, where at eve
The homeward cattle stop to drink;
Of dusty mills, where ever and aye
The merry millwheels whirl,
And of the jolly miller's boy,
Who loves the milking girl—
That blue-eyed, rosy, brown-lock'd lass,
Who morn and eve the mill must pass
To milk the kine i' the dewy grass.
Such tales as these the burn was telling,
Telling to the silent night,
Rising, falling, sinking, swelling.
Dark waves breaking into light;
Such song as this the burn was singing,
As it rippled on the sand,
A happy, peaceful story bringing
From the sleeping upper-land;—
And, tranced, I heard its quiet refrain,
Again repeated and again.

GREVILLE J. CHESTER.

HUNTING-GROUNDS OF OUR YOUTH.

BEING NOTES FROM THE DIARY OF A BOY.

Letter from an Uncle to a Nephew.

Y DEAR TOBY,

This is positively my last letter to you for the present.

You are becoming insatiable. I undertook to ransack my old diary for your edification, but I only promised to do so on the condition that you made use of the hints in practice. I see, however, that you have a tendency to look for your fun and amusement in my letters, and not in the places to which they tell you to go. This will do you no good. If you want to learn, you must go to the things and places themselves, and find out what fun there is to be got from them for yourself.

Now, I wish to put you in the way of enjoying the country by yourself, and on your own resources. I therefore have omitted to mention such sports and amusements as riding, and fox-hunting, and shooting parties, whether in field or covert, and games such as cricket and football. I have a store of hints about them, too, but these it is not my present object to divulge.

When I was your age I only got them sparingly, and you must not expect such things except as treats. If you can learn from what I have told you to amuse yourself by yourself, you will have learnt your lessons well. Not to be a nuisance to your neighbours by depending on them for your fun and interests is a negative duty, which is not as commonly carried out as it should be. How then do we stand? I am writing my last letter to you, considering that I have suggested to you enough, and far more than enough, to employ all your leisure time for a whole year; but in case I have not done so, and have not provided for some emergency which may arise on your rambles during the next year, I propose now to run over a great deal of ground very quickly, and you must catch what you can as we go. Where, then, am I to begin? As I sit writing to you, the question is answered. Up the passage—servants never will keep the kitchen door shut—comes an unmistakeable odour. Grouse, it must be, and nothing else; and so I take the hint and begin with the moors. This is where we will start on our imaginary ramble.

Supposing, then, that you chance to be on the moors somewhere about this time next year, what will there be for you to do? I refer to the old diary of the date when I was just your age, and I see the following entry: "*Went with Melchior to Edgehill. Shot a magpie, and shot at a stone on a wall, thinking it was a grouse.*" I remember that 12th of August well. It was the first of a series of annual visits to Edgehill on the same day of the year. Our kind friends lived on the moors. They possessed a small piece of moor and some fields and a plantation, which ran at the back of the house. There were boys in the family, and we were invited to join them in a grand attack on whatever we could find on the bit of moor and in the plantation. Duly on the 11th the pony was saddled, and riding turn and turn about, our guns and bags strapped behind, we climbed the big hills which lay between us and our destination. The question, "Which way does the wind blow?" was all absorbing during the evening of the 11th. On this depended our chance of sport. If the wind lay right, possibly, when the shooters on the surrounding moors began their attack, the disturbed birds might follow the wind, and be driven to our moor. Otherwise we had but little chance. One thing, however, must be done—we must get up before daylight. The farming man had sown a corner of the field, adjoining the plantation, with corn: all with a view to getting the birds to come and feed there. We were to creep round at the break of dawn, and try our luck at this decoy.

Restless, and eager to begin, we were sent to bed early, and were roused again before it was light. A cap fired up the chimney to clear the nipples of the guns—up the chimney, because, had it been let off outside the house in the stillness of the morning, it might have frightened the birds which we hoped were feeding on the corn stubble, a glass of milk, a filling of shot-bags and powder-flasks, were all the preliminaries necessary before we started on our journey. "Look here, young 'un; if you tread on sticks, and make a row, we will send you back." By this I understood that we were to stalk our game. Stooping, we crept along the side of the old stone wall. The sun had not shown himself. A thick mist covered the country; twenty yards in front nothing but vague shadows were visible. On all sides we heard the grouse calling to each other. The fresh smell of the morning and the heather was inspiring. Alas! for our luck; no birds were feeding on the corn. But as I strained

my eyes, looking into the mist, I thought I detected, seated on the wall of loose stones, a grouse. More than that, if my eyes were wrong my ears could not deceive me. A distinct cackle came from the very spot. I whispered my discovery to my comrades. It was considered doubtful whether the object I saw was a stone or a bird, but the cackle was in my favour. As it was my discovery I was to shoot. With my utmost precision I rested my elbow on the wall and took a long aim. Bang and whirr! The shot rattled against the wall, and the wings of a grouse, which had been sitting, not on the wall, but at the foot of it in the road on the other side, whistled and disappeared in the mist. My bird, or rather my stone, remained in its original position; and the only consolation I could get was in the little grey splashes of lead on the rough moor stone on the wall. Hardly had this occurred when the sound of guns was heard on the moor far away to our right hand. We ducked down close to the wall and waited. Presently forms appeared coming swiftly but silently towards us, growing larger and larger, till they seemed like the roc in the story of Sinbad the Sailor. There were three grouse swooping towards us close above our heads. I saw a flash issue from Melchior's gun-barrel, and before I heard the sound my own trigger had been pulled. One bird fell.

"The sun now rose upon the right, out of the 'heath' came he."

The mist rose, and was blown off the moors by the morning breeze. The transformation scene completed itself; even the red light was not wanting, for the heather blazed in a pink glory under the hot August sun as we went home to breakfast. Off again after a snipe, which was in the habit of roosting in the rushes on a bit of marsh at the bottom of the plantation, but he was not there. We found his bed and the marks of his long bill in the peat where he had searched for his breakfast, but he had gone. Of course, Toby, there are other things to be found on moors besides grouse and heather. There are flowers, some peculiar to such places, and very lovely. I once came across an emerald green patch of grass on the slope of a hill, where the ground was boggy from a spring which rose there and trickled down to the trout stream below, and it was a blaze of *Bog pimpernel*, with its exquisitely tender pink flowers; of *Sundew* (*drosera*), with its odd sticky red leaves stuck over with hairs, each capped by a

bead of dew, and sometimes covered with dead little flies, which had been glued as by birdlime to the plant; and lastly, of perhaps the most delicate wild-flower that exists, *Campanula hederacea*, the very tiniest bluebell, creeping all over the bright emerald green grass. Of ferns, you will find beech and oak ferns, mountain fern, and hard fern, besides the common ones. Avoid places where the cotton grass shakes its white fluffy head in the wind if you wish to avoid sinking in a bog. Are you thirsty? Help yourself to handfuls of black bilberries, but do not take by mistake the berries of one of the heaths which they say nothing but crows eat, and are called crowberries. You will find the little red carberries or cowberries, and perhaps cranberries. But enough of moors; we have to get over the ground quicker than this.

Change the scene and get to the side of a pond. If you find yourself in such a position next spring or summer, think of your rod and tackle. Are there trout in it?—fish early in the morning and late in the evening in the summer, unless the weather is very stormy and rough. Then get to the roughest side, and throw close to the bank. Choose this side in preference to throwing with the wind at your back, for remember that fish go in search of food, and therefore, where their food is, there you must throw for them. Any flies which are beaten down on the water drift with the wind to the rough side of the pond. If the weather is very wet, and the water muddy, set night lines. Not lines to be in the water only during the night, but while you are fishing from the bank with your rod. Remember that trout are not eels, so do not use gimp hooks and string, but a yard and a half of gut, and two small hooks; one at the end, and the other an inch and a half above it. Bait with a worm, and drop it in close to the side by roots or stones where you have seen fish dart out from the side before. Such places are their breakfast and dining rooms, and they come back thither to feed. About ponds water-hens linger in the weeds. If there are perch in the pond, and you find bobbing with a float monotonous, see if there is a side of the pond where the water is shallow and there are plenty of stones at the bottom. Should the wind be rough and blowing, on such a side you can get sport by throwing your worm as you would for trout in a stream close to the bank. The perch will dart out at it from among the stones. Have you no pond to go to? Perhaps there will be some little brook near. If there are not trout in it, perhaps you will find

some roach. Fix some pins at the end of your stick by way of a spear, have another stick with which to turn over the flat stones at the bottom, and dab your spear on the roach as they lie on the sand under the stones. They are rather good to eat when toasted, and served up on toast. Or if there are no roach, perhaps there will be cray-fish. These will give you sport both by day and night. When the sun is out you will find them under the stones. It requires a neat hand to grab them before they have grabbed you with their lobster-like claws. If you want to catch them in quantities, you must make a hoop of iron or wood, and stretch a piece of net over it flat. Attach strings by which you can suspend it from the end of a pole, when it will look like one of a pair of scales: in the centre of the net, and, in fact, all over it, tie bits of liver, and lower your net so baited into a likely hole with plenty of stones at the bottom. Have several such nets at work, and keep looking at them every half-hour, or at less intervals of time. You will probably find, at least, one cray clinging to each bit of liver, nor will he drop it to run away. You can lift them all bodily from the water. On some nights you will catch quantities, while on other nights they will not come out.

Nor must you omit to catch and observe the flies that are born on the banks of the stream. Never miss the opportunity of catching the flies that are about the banks of any piece of water. You can catch them with your hand, if you are quick, as they flutter over the reeds and grass, or come sailing down on the bosom of the stream. Notice the colours of the bodies and wings. Keep a note-book. Think of your feathers, and invent an imitation of the fly before you, putting down in your book the recipe. The body of the fly, say, is orange; put down: *Body, orange silk*. The wings of the fly are two in number, and gauzy; put down: *Winged fly*, as opposed to hackle fly, on account of the number of wings, and *starling's wing*, or *light feather from under a young grouse's wing*, according to the shade. Perhaps *jay's wing* is the colour you are most reminded of. The legs look reddish or sandy; put down: *Legs ginger, or red hackle, or feather from under landrail's wing*. If the fly has four wings you know he must be imitated hacklewise.

But this is not all. Out of the stream you may stock an aquarium with freshwater shrimps and all the rest, or you may make a collection of freshwater algæ, and either keep them growing alive or press them in the same way as you would sea-weeds. Talking of freshwater

aquaria, if you keep beetles or newts or tadpoles, have a rock in the middle, *above* water, where they can indulge their amphibian tastes, and do not omit to cover the top of the vessel with gauze, or you will find your beetles flying about the room at night, and will lose your newts and little frogs under tables and chairs.

Shall you have nothing but a wood to fall back upon for amusement? What have you not got in a wood? Birds' nests to rob; squirrels to pursue; moths to entice to their fate; flowers in abundance, of all sorts and kinds too numerous here to mention. Moreover, you may do the game good service by pursuing weasels and stoats. Get behind a tree close to a little path in the wood, and imitate with your lips the squeak of a wild rabbit. Keep perfectly quiet in other respects. You will hear a little rustle under the bracken, and out upon the path will run a weasel or a stoat, come to seize the rabbit by the throat. Hit him on the head with a thick stick. Have you only the fields to fly to? Even here you can get your sport. Larks get up rather as partridges do, and are good practice, and make nice pies. Use small shot for them. Do you want to stalk? Call landrails, either with your mouth, or by scraping the teeth of a comb. They will answer, and thinking it a mate, will run fast through the long grass towards you. Advance upon them with your dog, and then they will get up, and you will get a shot. They will not rise very readily unless a dog puts them up. Otherwise, they *run* in the grass. Here again are flowers; some sorts for hedgerows, and some for cornfields, and some for meadow lands, all differing in character according to the situation. Here, too, you can pursue butterflies, getting your legs wet up to your knees in the blooming fields of clover.

Will the chalk downs be your place of sojourn? There again you will find butterflies—the blues and fritillaries and skippers. There are flowers many, and of peculiar characters: *campanulæ*, gentians, saxifrages, bee orchis and fly orchis, and *habenaria*. There the chalk pits will reward your hammer and chisel with fossils. Or, if you need a rougher sport, this is the country over which to chase a badger. He, with his long hare-like hind legs, gets up-hill very fast, and he has lots of pluck and endurance. He can and will bite severely. Bull terriers should be held in leash to turn him and pull him out of a hedge or thicket in which he may want to escape. There, lastly, you may catch your little birds—chaffinches, goldfinches and

bulfinches, and linnets. In the cold weather you will see flocks of little birds fluttering over the patches of thistles which are scattered over the downs. They are after the seed of the thistle; but this they soon ravage, clearing every stem. Your policy will be to take with you some old thistle-plants in which there is seed still left. Stick these in holes in the turf, and lay your nets round, or use birdlime. The hungry finches will soon find the seed out, and flock down to devour it. Have a bag in which to carry the captives to their cages.

Shall you be by the sea? Shrimp: always remembering to have a net with *no* holes in, and to push your net *against* the flow of the water: *e. g.*, if the tide is coming in, push rather out to sea; if it is going out, meet the shrimps as they come with the stream. Recollect you will catch more shrimps when the water is muddy than when it is clear. Shrimps have eyes, and can run away when they see you. If you have no net, wade among the rocks and catch prawns with your fingers. Are there no rocks? Then dig for sand eels in the damp sand. They are little silvery creatures, who can burrow through the sand quicker than you would think possible. You will find them very quick. Toasted and split on a toasting-fork, and laid on a slice of bread and butter, they are a delicate morsel for a gourmand. Need I remind you that there are sea-weeds to collect, and zoophytes and an aquarium to be stocked? Again, flowers will pursue you to the beach. Quite a new set. Yellow horned poppies, thrifts, sea holly, fennel, and many more. Wherever you are, always be observing; there is always something to observe: even at night you can observe the stars and the formation of the clouds. In your room you can watch the spiders and flies on the window; in your garden the flowers and the bees; and not only the hive bees but the carpenter bee, that comes and carves his semicircular patch out of each of your favourite rose's leaves. This is the creature that, boring into the stump of an old gate post, deposits an egg; it then seals that egg up hermetically in a cell and proceeds to lay another between it and the outside, and so fills up the hole. Hence arises a question for you, Toby. The egg first laid, one would naturally suppose, hatches first. How does he get out without disturbing his younger brethren in front of him?

Well, Toby, I must come to an end somewhere, and here will be as good as anywhere. The moral of all this tale is—observe. It is well worth your while, not only for the knowledge you will

gather, but also for the mental training it gives. The pleasure arising from such practice is immense. You go for an ordinary walk; you cast your eye along the hedges, recognising each flower as an old friend, each butterfly or fly as an old acquaintance. You recognise a favourite singer in the bush by his voice; you associate the greedy suck of trout in the stream with pleasant days and heavy baskets, both in the past and in the future. Nothing presents no interest. Strange things imperatively demand your acquaintance. The mental training you get is a habit of concentration. I see a flower: at once I mentally name it, according to my ability. The ideas connected with it flash instantaneously through my memory. So necessary does the habit of observation become, that not to be allowed to exercise it is painful. Your uncle, my boy, when he was only a little older than you, was taken to Switzerland, and as he crossed the district of the Jura mountains in the train, new flowers, new butterflies passed rapidly before the carriage windows, just slow enough to enable him to glance and guess at their names and families; but the train was inexorable, and the excitement of finding a new plant was given and taken in a breath. Such tantalization is trying. But if you don't become an enthusiast, Toby, your uncle will be satisfied if the hints he has given you only serve to keep you out of mischief.

Your affectionate Uncle.

THE IRON-WOOD TREE AND THE PARASITE.



IN the forest, side by side, there stood two iron-wood trees;* the one was tall and sprightly, and upright as an arrow, looking up to the skies with its youthful branches and crown of dark green leaves, a glory to behold; whilst the other was an aged and bent tree, with gnarled stem and angulated branches, which, together with many a yellow leaf and scantily clad twig, formed a striking contrast to the young tree.

"Have you seen the climber that is creeping up my stem?" inquired the young iron-wood tree of her aged and bent companion.—"Have

* *Vepris lanceolata*.

you," continued the young tree, "seen my friend, the spotted climber,* with her handsome semi-transparent stem, covered with elongated purple spots? We have entered into a league; it is our intention to dwell together in the woods; you are aware that 'union is strength,' and our united stems and branches will form a shield against the storms: 'then let the winds howl on,' we shall be to each other a tower of strength; we shall not care for 'winter and rough weather.'"

"My friend," replied the aged and bent tree, "beware of evil companions. In the days of my youth I was tall and stately as yourself, I was not the deformed thing which you now behold; but, unfortunately, I harboured one of these spotted parasites—one of the same plants that is now creeping up your stem—and mark the result. I am prematurely worn and bent with age, my days have been darkened, and I have had no pleasure in them; your friend the climber is fair to look upon, but beware of her treachery; for, like the 'Old Man of the Mountain,' she will cling to you, and, when once established amongst your branches, will cast off the stem which connects her with the earth, by which she now obtains her nourishment, and will become parasitical upon your back; her great weight eventually bowing down your proud head to the low earth. My young friend, beware of the spotted parasite."

The counsel of the aged tree was, however, disregarded, for the treacherous climber, whispering to her friend, said in the most beguiling manner, "Do not believe it! place no faith in such whims and fancies; they have arisen out of envy and jealousy: why should you dwell alone? If we mingle our leaves and branches, and blossom together in the woods, we shall be more beautiful than all the other trees; even *Erythrina* † in all her gorgeous beauty, and the wild chestnut tree, ‡ will sink into insignificance beside us."

In the pride of her heart, the credulous young tree believed in her false friend, and that they might dwell together in the forest, she took to her bosom the purple spotted parasite.

* The spotted parasite, *Cuscuta Cassythoides*. "Parasitical, cord-like, leafless plants, germinating in the soil, but soon attaching themselves by disk-like suckers to the stems of neighbouring plants: when this occurs the primary root withers away, and the parasite henceforth draws its nourishment from the plant to which it has affixed itself."—"Genera of South African Plants."

† *Erythrina Kaffia*.

‡ *Calodendron capense*.

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However, as time wore on, the result became evident; the climber grew to an immense size, and multiplied her innumerable twining-stems, like entangled whipcord amongst the branches, and at length, by detaching herself from the stem which connected her with the soil, from which as a seedling she had originally sprung, took up her abode entirely upon the young iron-wood tree, affixing herself by her insidious suckers to every part of it, usurping the places of the branchlets, and appropriating to herself the whole of the nourishment and sap which the tree supplied. As for blossoming together in the woods, alas, for the poor iron-wood tree! she could never boast of a single flower; the blossoming was all accomplished by the parasitical "Old Man of the Mountain," whose great accumulation of twining stems at length overburdened her friend, and bowed down her sprightly head almost unto the earth.

However, Time, who has its revenge upon us all, saw the end of the parasite; her days were accomplished, and she was gathered to her long home; but the iron-wood tree was a cripple for life, she never again regained her former sprightliness, although for many a long year she continued to dwell in the forest after the purple-spotted parasite had ceased to be remembered; but she had become prematurely old, bent, and gnarled, and hollow-hearted, and the wild bees took up their abode within the cavity of her sheltering stem; mosses and lichens found a home amongst her rugged branches, tree-ferns,* with their spreading leaves and long green streamers, beautified the scene, and there, too, in the spring-time, the lovely white trumpet-shaped blossoms of the tree-orchid shed their fragrance around the spot. She was beautiful in her decay.

"Well," said the iron-wood tree, "I am glad they have found a home amongst my branches, for I never liked the idea of living alone."

"For I was kind to old Decay,
And wrapped it softly round in green,
On naked root and trunk of grey
Spread out a garniture and screen.
He praised my varied hues—the green,
The silver hoar, the golden brown;
Said lovelier hues were never seen,
Then gently pressed my tender down."

* Tree-ferns, *Davallia concinna*, &c.

LOOKING BACK.

CONTINUATION OF THE "WHITE SHELL," by the Author of "*Gabriel and his Adventures*," &c.

PART I.

THE DOLL ON THE WALL.



PEN the cupboard door, children; you will find her lying on the top shelf; she has often been down before, for mamma's old doll is a standing favourite, and treated with the respect due to her years. Set her on the table, against the lid of the work-box, and let me take a good look at her. The face is battered and dirty, the hair is tangled and half torn off, the bran runs out at every crevice, and the limbs have lost the firm plumpness of youth. That is the picture of Helen in her old age; but Helen as she was first put into my arms, how different! Let me describe her, for I have never seen a doll made in her fashion, either before or since. She had bright black eyes and dark curls, and the rosy lips were slightly parted, showing four white teeth, and a tongue in the background; the whole body was covered with delicate pink kid, and the limbs were perfectly shaped. The feet were my special delight, for they had proper toes like a child's, and my baby sister's first socks just fitted her. It was possible to make her stand, though it was a difficult matter to get the balance exact.

My pride in this remarkable doll was unbounded, and I named her Helen, after the beautiful heroine of Troy: she was given to me by the lady in grey. The pleasure I had in dressing this doll I shall never forget; and the climax of delight was reached when my mother ordered a straw bonnet to be made for her by the village milliner.

In spite of our games with the boys, I found time to devote to my new treasure, whom I guarded with jealous care, lest any tricks should be played upon her. But one day, much against my will, Dick pressed my darling Helen into his service, in the way I am going to relate. I pleaded in vain that she might be let off, but Dick replied, that England expected every man to do his duty, dolls included; and that she must contribute to the general amusement.

Now Dick was despotic in the family; he was our king, our leader, our tyrant; and surely no tyrant was ever more loved, admired, and cheerfully obeyed. There was something about Dick's round face, good humour, dash, decision, and laughing impudence, that carried all before him. At this time he was a sturdy boy of thirteen, looking forward with anxiety to the time when he should go to sea. My father's cousin was one of the Lords of the Admiralty, and he had promised to secure the boy a naval cadetship.

Alfred was a year younger than Dick, a slight fair boy, with twice the beauty, and half the fascination of his elder brother. The two boys went twice a day to the vicarage for their lessons, the Vicar teaching them with his own sons: it was noticed that as the boys walked along, Alfred was always two or three paces behind Dick; and so it happened that Alfred was talked of as Dick's shadow. Stella was a tall pale girl of fifteen, rather delicate, looked up to by us all, and the only one who had authority over Dick. Rhoda came next above me; intensely practical, and clever with her needle, she and my younger brother Louis, who also had a turn that way, used to produce the most wonderful things in the shape of doll's hats and bonnets, baskets of moss and fir-cones, and parasols of plaited rushes. I have heard that the leading milliner in Paris is a man, and, stranger still, an Englishman: if Louis had been brought up to the trade, I feel convinced he could have taken that man's place.

Alma followed Louis, and then came the baby. You see we were a large family; and, depend upon it, to be one of many is a very good thing. Odd corners are rubbed off, tempers are tried and trained in early days, selfishness is not so easily acquired, and tricks and peculiarities are checked before they have taken firm hold of us.

Rhoda and I, the two centre ones, always declared that we were the only ones who had never been spoilt: the eldest son and daughter were, of course, made much of: Alfred, with his excessive beauty, could not escape a great amount of notice; but as we never felt jealous of him, it shows that he bore his honours meekly; and the others, from delicate health or remaining the youngest for a longer time, came in for more indulgence than ever fell to our share. Though different in every way from each other, we were great friends and companions: our mother dressed us alike, and I remember now the drawn blue silk bonnets, and merino frocks, in which we were

much admired. For a time we were the same height, and strangers mistook us for twins; but as I ran on, and Louis shot up, poor Rhoda was once more caught up, and mistaken for a twin. One day she shook her square shoulders ruefully, saying, "I shall never stop being a twin with somebody, unless I can stretch myself out somehow." Dick laughed at her dismay, and dubbed her Gemini on the spot, which name stuck to her ever since in the shortened form of "Gem," finally "Jem;" and you know, children, that "Auntie Jem" is still the pet term for the kind aunt who, remaining unmarried, gives all her love, and care, and trouble to her little nephews and nieces.

At one side of the house was a large enclosure, bounded on two sides by a wall on which hung our neat little rabbit pens; and on the other two by the stables, coach-house, pigsties, and various outhouses containing faggots, boxes, and stores of all kinds. The rabbits were a great amusement; we had over thirty at one time, and the greater number were white, with pink eyes. We used to shut all the doors and gates, and let them loose in the enclosure; and after giving them a good stretch, we used to run them into corners to catch them again. I shall never forget the disaster that over-anxiety on my part caused to a whole family. We put an old white rabbit into a small outhouse, the floor nicely covered with straw; and it was a great interest to us to watch the gradual growth of ten little white balls, that lay in the snug nest in the corner. It was very pretty, as they grew older, to see them skipping about amongst the straw in their nice large abode. It came into my head that I should like to give them a special treat, in the way of food; and I went round the kitchen garden, looking out for some tempting morsel. I paused in front of the rhubarb bed, and it struck me that we had never given any of the leaves to our rabbits, and what a treat it would be to the dear little pets. Gathering a handful of the youngest, tenderest leaves I could find, I scattered them amongst the family of ten; the little things rushed upon the spoil, and I left them eating eagerly.

When I went to look at them again in the afternoon, picture my horror at finding one, two, three, four little rabbits lying dead upon the floor! Everybody rushed to the scene of the catastrophe, and great lamentation followed. Dick called me an idiot, and other expressive names, for giving food that anybody with a grain of sense would know to be poisonous. In the course of the day one little

thing drooped after another, till the old rabbit was left childless. She had been wiser in her generation, and, refusing the dangerous novelty, stuck to her parsley and lettuce leaves like a good old Tory; leaving the young and rash to perish in their hasty pursuit of something new. It was a lesson to me not to travel new roads, and make experiments, without the advice of older and wiser heads than mine.

This enclosure, or yard as we called it, was a favourite playground with us. In one place the wall was thickly covered with ivy, and it was our delight to scramble up, and lie amongst the cool green leaves, shaded above by a clump of sycamore trees; and on wet days we used to turn into the large loft above the stables, which was always well filled with straw and hay.

"Let us be rabbits," said Dick one day, "and I will make a burrow from one end of the loft to the other."

After a great deal of exertion and struggling, Dick, with the help of Alfred, succeeded in making a long burrow, right under the hay, with an opening at each end. The girls were then invited to turn rabbits, and to follow the lead of the boys. It seemed a perilous undertaking; the burrow would be dark and hot and stuffy: there could not well be an explosion of gas, as in a coal-mine; but still there might be death from suffocation. However, Rhoda and I were not accustomed to hang back when called upon by our leader, and Dick soon overruled our fears. I think we should have followed him up to the Redan.

"There is no danger," said Dick, "if you will catch hold of each other's heels, and all pull together."

I laugh when I think of that quaint procession underground of writhing, struggling children: the burrow was not over-wide and roomy, and the atmosphere *was* a trifle close. Dick went first; I followed, clinging to his heels; then came Alfred, then Rhoda, and Louis bringing up the rear. We arrived in heat and triumph at the end of our travels, and the first helped to pull the last ones out.

"Bravo, girls!" cried Dick, "that was bravely done; now for another go."

I cannot tell how many journeys were made that, and many following days, till something happened that put a stop to any further burrowing.

Louis and I were amusing ourselves one afternoon in the loft, making

dens in the corners, and pretending to be lions; pouncing out upon imaginary passers-by, and worrying them with violence. I said I would go and fetch Helen, and pretend she was an enchantress and lion-tamer. On reaching the schoolroom, I found Stella arranging some pictures in a new album that was to amuse the children. She asked my advice, and we became so taken up with our occupation that I forgot all about Louis and the lions, and remained about an hour, helping Stella to cut out pictures and gum them into the book.

The ringing of the tea bell brought me to my senses, and, filled with remorse at my desertion of poor Louis, I rushed out and called to him from the foot of the ladder; on hearing no reply I returned to the house, concluding that he had given me up, and gone away: but when we sat down to tea no Louis was there. Inquiries were made, and I explained where I had seen him last.

"Perhaps he has fallen asleep amongst the hay," suggested Miss Mound; "run out, Adelaide, and look for him."

This time I went straight up the ladder, without stopping to call out; looking round, nothing was to be seen in the shape of a boy.

"Louis, Louis," I cried at the top of my voice. A stifled cry came from somewhere. I rushed to the dens in the corner, but no trace of Louis there.

"Where are you?" I shouted as another noise struggled up, and I began to feel terribly frightened. "Do tell me where you are!" I implored in a tone of agony.

Then from the depths of the hay came a feeble voice, "I'm in the burrow, and I can't get out: I shall be dead soon."

"Oh, don't die yet, Louis," I replied, trembling with fright; "wait a bit, we will soon get you out."

I scrambled down the ladder faster than I came, and seeing Dick's head thrust out of the school-room window, I wildly beckoned to him, and he sprang out in a moment.

"What's up now?" he asked, as I clutched his arm.

"Louis is being smothered in the burrow, and he cannot get out."

Dick gave a whistle of surprise. "Find one of the men," he said, "and send him with a pitchfork."

Whilst Dick ran off to the loft, I rushed round the premises, and fortunately lighted upon the groom. With his help the hay was carefully removed, and poor little Louis drawn out, half dead

with suffocation, heat, and fright. His face was nearly purple, and his eyes were swelled up with crying. We sat him by the open window, and he quickly revived as the cool air blew upon him.

"However did you get into such a mess as that?" inquired Dick, as he stood eyeing the boy; "you have often been down that burrow before."

"Something has happened to it," he replied with a sob; "it's stopped up half-way, and I could not get backwards either."

"You are too little to try such things by yourself," remarked Dick, with the superiority of thirteen years.

"Adelaide never came back," said the poor child, dolefully. "I was tired of being a lion, and thought I would be a rabbit for a change."

"I am so sorry I forgot you, Louis," I exclaimed; "but Stella wanted me, and that was how I never came."

"Well, cheer up," said Dick. "You are not a dead man this time; come along and have some tea."

We put Louis on Dick's broad back, and he carried him off to the house. After this adventure our burrowing was put a stop to. But Dick, with his fertile brain, soon seized upon a new idea, in which the beautiful Helen was destined to play an important part.

One evening my father was amusing Alma by making a paper gun, and firing it off with more noise than smoke. He took an uncut, double sheet of the "Times," and folded it up into a long narrow strip, and doubled it in half, laying the two ends together, which he held in one hand, whilst he held the other end in the other hand: by pressing your hands together, and sending one half forwards and one half backwards, the gun is formed, and you pretend to take your aim.

"Present arms; make ready," cried my father, pointing his weapon at Alma's curly head. "Fire!" and drawing his hands quickly out, the sides of the newspaper clapped together with such a violent noise, that Alma caught hold of her curls, to feel if they had been blown away.

Dick was delighted with the idea: we must all have paper, or air-guns, as he called them; we must form ourselves into a company of marines; we must be drilled, and marched about. Behind a heap of faggots we fought the most bloody battles; carrying destruction with our fatal guns into the enemy's ship, and finally boarding her in triumph.

Being off duty one day, I was carrying my Helen about; and taking her into the yard, where the others were presenting arms, and firing with great energy, I was greeted by Dick with a shout of delight.

"Just in time, Adelaide; we are going to shoot a deserter; I was going to rig up a log of wood, but your doll will be the thing."

"Oh, no, Dick," I cried.

"Nonsense, it will do her no harm. We will set her on the wall, tie a string to the back of her dress, and you shall stand on the other side of the wall, and twitch her backwards when you hear the word 'Fire.' Catch her in your arms, and she will be none the worse."

"But they do not *shoot* men on board ship," I remonstrated, "they hang them at the yard-arm."

"Admiral Byng was shot," replied Dick decisively; "if you like we will pretend she is Admiral Byng."

"He never wore a pink coat, and straw bonnet trimmed with green."

They all burst out laughing at this; and before I had time to think of any better excuse, Helen was perched on the wall, with a string at her waist, and I found myself planted behind the wall, ready to carry out this novel execution.

Dick placed his marines in front of Admiral Byng, who calmly waited his fate without even blinking his eyes! "Present arms," he shouted with a roar worthy of a full-grown officer. I nervously tightened the string. "Make ready," followed in a few seconds. This time I held my breath. "Fire!" A twitch, a pull, and Admiral Byng tottered on the wall and fell backwards into my arms.

"Bravo!" shouted Dick.

"Capital!" said Stella, who was looking on; "it would deceive any one who did not know the trick: but the effect would be better if Helen had a paper cocked-hat on her head, and a scarf tied across her shoulder."

These alterations were soon made, and Helen was again mounted on the wall, looking excessively military, though perhaps not much like an Admiral of the fleet.

"It is a pity we should have no audience for this performance," said Dick, as he opened the gate leading into the road. A mild, slow voice greeted him on the other side.

"Well, Master Dick, and what are you after?"

A little chirpy voice followed, "What have you got in your hand, Dick?"

It was our neighbour Mr. Cutlip and his wife: he was a tall thin man, she was a small thin woman, as quick and lively as he was slow and silent. He prided himself upon his greenhouse, and she upon her singing.

Dick boldly replied that he was carrying an air-gun, and invited them to come and see what execution it could do.

"Dear me!" cried Mrs. Cutlip, after putting up an eye-glass, "you have all got air-guns: how very formidable! and why have you put the doll on the wall?"

"That is Admiral Byng," replied Dick, with importance, "and we are going to shoot him with our air-guns. Now, men, fall into line; present arms; make ready; fire!"

With a trembling hand I pulled the string, and Admiral Byng fell into my arms.

"Good gracious!" shrieked Mrs. Cutlip, dropping her eye-glass.

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Cutlip, for once surprised into quickness of speech.

"What deadly weapons!" continued the wife.

"What a curious discovery!" mused the husband; "a remarkable application of the force of air."

"But tell me, Henry," asked Mrs. Cutlip, "how the doll fell off the wall, without either gunpowder or shot? It seems impossible."

"Not at all, my dear. Dick told us they were air-guns; and the violent concussion of the air, caused by the clapping of all those paper guns, would be quite sufficient to cause the doll—I beg his pardon, Admiral Byng—to lose his equilibrium, in the manner we have just seen."

Mrs. Cutlip accepted her husband's explanation of the phenomenon, with the simple remark that it was very curious; whilst we children were scarcely able to suppress our laughter at the success of the joke. I know that I was giggling behind the wall, and stuffing Admiral Byng's head into my mouth for fear of being heard.

A second performance was called for; and Dick, running round, took Helen from my arms, whispering, "You do it capitally; that little shake before the fall is first-rate."

With a spring, and catch at the ivy, Dick soon mounted the wall.

and perched up the doll as before, taking care that the string behind should not appear. After seeing the Admiral fall for the second time, Mr. and Mrs. Cutlip departed, deeply impressed with the wonderful power of such simple instruments as our paper guns.

We were so elated at our success, that we were desirous that minute of performing before the Queen, and all the crowned heads of Europe. The doll had scarcely been settled on the wall again, when the jolly face of Mr. Eaton, the vicar, peeped over the wall, and a hearty voice called out "Holloa, there!"

With a shriek of delight they all dragged him in, and invited him to look at their air-guns, and to see how well they could shoot.

"Air-guns," he repeated, turning over Dick's, with a quizzical look; "ha, ha, ha! let me see how they act."

There was something in the tone of his good-humoured laugh that made me tremble in my shoes; and I felt I should be certain to make some fearful mistake, and betray the whole thing.

"So you are going to shoot that doll on the wall," he continued; "or should I put myself up for a mark instead? Do you think, Miss Rhoda, that you would blow me all to pieces, and send my limbs knocking at the doors in the village?"

They all laughed at the vicar's joke, but objected to a live target for fear of accidents. Dick drew up his men in front of Admiral Byng, and went through the usual form of words. I pulled the string at the right moment, in spite of my nervousness, and the vicar clapped his hands with delight, and shouted "Bravo," as the ill-fated and unjustly treated Admiral fell back in the agonies of death.

"Very good, very good, indeed," said Mr. Eaton; "now, Dick, let me see you do it again."

There was mischief in the tone of the vicar's voice; and I looked behind to see if the coast was clear for a run, if need be. Dick replaced the doll upon the wall, and planted his men in front: he had just given the first words of command, when Mr. Eaton burst in with a loud "Fire," and my hand, mechanically obeying the well-known signal, gave the string a good twitch, and Admiral Byng quavered visibly before a shot had been fired. Self-possession returned in an instant; I knew I had ruined all, and, horrified at my stupidity, I dropped the string, and ran for my life. Too late, however. With a loud laugh at the success of his stratagem, the vicar jumped up

the wall just in time to see my petticoats flying behind some bushes.

"Ah ha, Miss Adelaide, I see you," he called out; "how dare you play such a trick upon me! but I am too old a bird to be so easily taken in."



It was some time before I could be dragged out of my hiding-place; but at last I put on a bold face, and joined the others; and we all had our laugh together.

"How could you be so stupid as to be thrown off your guard in that way?" said Dick, reproachfully.

"It was enough to put any one out," I replied; "and I believe you would have done just the same."

"Of course he would," said the vicar; "you did your part very well, Adelaide, but you could not expect me to swallow those air-guns."

We told him the tale of the Cutlips, at which he laughed, saying we were mischievous monkeys, and that we had no business to play tricks upon simple, unsuspecting people.

I do not think that Helen ever again played the part of Admiral Byng. Soon after this our ringleader took his departure; and in after years we had many a laugh over the recollection of the doll on the wall.

PART II.

LOCKED IN.

YES, Dick was gone, and you can imagine how we missed him. Alfred was now the eldest son and brother at home; and he was an active, manly boy, in spite of his angelic and rather effeminate beauty. When we found that he was not to be spoilt by petting or admiration, we transferred a good deal of our allegiance to him. Louis was also promoted from the governess to the vicar; and he began to accompany Alfred to school, just as Alfred used to accompany Dick. Needlework was seriously interfered with, and I do not think that Louis accomplished much after this period; though on a wet half-holiday, Rhoda used to catch him sometimes in her toils.

Of course Dick had become a great hero in the family after expanding into a midshipman in Her Majesty's service; to say nothing of the fact that the absent ones are always exalted above the heads of those at home. One of my amusements now was playing at being Dick: acting improbable scenes on board fancy ships, getting mast-headed, fighting great battles, and being often taken prisoner, and escaping. It was a fact overlooked by me that England was at peace, taking a long breath after a long contest; and had Dick been a regular fire-eater he would have found it hard to carry out his tastes.

I have already mentioned the numerous outhouses built round the yard; one was a building of two stories, the lower part containing

mangold wurzels and turnips, with a machine for cutting them into slices for the cows; an occupation we were fond of, as the crunching noise pleased us. Above was a room full of lumber; amongst other things, the large wooden piano case, which struck me one afternoon as being just the thing to represent Dick's ship. Delighted with the idea, I made the most of it. I fastened a piece of stick to my side, which I pretended was my sword; I cocked my hat at the back of my head, in what I fancied to be correct sailor fashion: to crown all, I put a chip of wood in my mouth, puffing away as if it were a cigar, little thinking that an officer on duty would no more think of smoking, than of putting on plain clothes.

However, I tramped up and down the piano case, superbly happy, and superior in the fancy that I was pacing the deck of a noble frigate, that I was smoking an excellent Havannah, that a storm was at hand, that the captain was asleep below, and that all depended on my skill and coolness. I shouted to the men, took all sail in, struck the top-gallant masts, and making all snug and safe, I folded my arms defiantly, saying, "Let the worst come."

It did not strike me that the light through the dim, dusty window was slowly fading; but was there not a fearful storm? and it all fitted into my fancy. I did hear a slight grating noise below, but that was nothing when every plank in the ship was creaking, and the wind howling in the rigging. You see I was out of the world of facts, in a region of my own creating.

For some reasons it is a fine thing to have a vivid imagination; it lifts you out of a world of petty cares and troubles; but, on the other hand, it makes you dreamy and visionary, and not sufficiently on the look-out for acquiring the practical knowledge necessary for practical life in this hard-working world.

Bear in mind, dear children, that however exalted the station, or easy the circumstances, life, to bear any good result, must mean work, of one kind or another—work done to God, or for God; and woe to those who make it only a pastime and a pleasure.

It was autumn, when the evenings close in quickly; and I could not help waking up to the fact that darkness was overtaking me. With a sudden panic, I recalled the grating noise I had heard below, and groping down the stairs, I found that my fears were realised, and that I was locked in. In vain did I shake, and kick and batter at the

door: everything was locked up for the night, and it was a chance if ever I should be heard from the house. What should I do?

The rattling of my sword against my heels brought me to my senses. Why should I not play at being Dick all through the night, till the man came and unlocked the door in the morning? It would only be rather a longer game than usual. To be sure, I was getting hungry, and the ship happened to be out of provisions. I fancied that we had thrown everything overboard during the storm, to lighten the ship; just as St. Paul and his companions had done. But I remembered that there were turnips as well as mangold wurzels below; and also a sack of beans that were ground up for the horses.

There was sufficient light to help me in my search for food; and my spirits rose as I filled my pocket with beans and picked out a round fat turnip, which I managed to cut into slices at a great risk to my fingers. Thus supplied, I groped upstairs again, and sitting in a corner of the piano case, proceeded to eat my turnip, and munch at the dry hard beans, with all the relish a hungry sailor would bring to his salt junk and hard biscuits.

It was impossible to contrive a hammock, but I dragged out a piece of old matting, and folding it up, made the best bed I could; and as the darkness was deepening every minute, the only thing I could do was to lie down and go to sleep.

The novelty of my situation, and the anticipation of my usual bedtime by several hours, kept me awake for some time, and the difficulty of keeping up in the region of fancy became greater every moment. I began to think of the tale my Aunt Bessie had told us.

She one day went into a shop, and asked for a piece of blue ribbon: after fumbling about for some time, the shopman produced a box, saying, "We are out of that colour, ma'am, but here is this pink—can't you fancy it's blue?"

"Fancy it's blue!" returned my aunt, indignantly, and preparing to walk away, when a sudden idea struck her. "O yes," she said, stopping, "I think I can fancy it's blue; cut off a yard, and wrap it up for me."

The shopman obeyed, smiling with satisfaction at the apparent success of his impudent joke. My aunt took the parcel from the man, and walked away. For a moment he stood looking at her with surprise, then running after her said, "If you please, ma'am, you have forgotten to pay for the ribbon."

"Oh," replied Aunt Bessie, looking him full in the face, "you must fancy you're paid."

The man looked extremely foolish, as my aunt swept out of the shop without another word. She returned the ribbon next day by post, when she thought he had had time to digest the lesson she had given him.

At last I fell asleep, dreaming I was rocked in the cradle of the deep. But you must not fancy that I actually spent the night there; my absence was noticed by the others when the daylight went out, and the tea came in. At first they thought little of it, saying, "Oh, Adelaide has fallen into one of her dreams; she'll turn up presently." But as time passed, and I did not turn up, they began to make a stir. The house was thoroughly searched first, and then my father, accompanied by Alfred and Louis, went round the garden with a lantern, and then to the stables and outhouses.

I was awakened from my sleep by the flashing of a light in my eyes, and I started up, scarcely knowing whether I was Dick or myself, whether I was on land or water, and whether friends or foes surrounded me. My father's voice set my mind at rest.

"Well, this is a queer place to choose for a bed," he said, lifting me up in his arms, and carrying me straight away to the house, where I had to tell my story with some bashfulness, and confess that I had made my tea off turnips and beans. With a caution from my mother to be more careful another time, and to consider the feelings of others, I was allowed to make a proper meal of tea and bread and butter, which I need not say I heartily enjoyed after my rough sea fare.

The story was told to Dick by letter, and he enjoyed the joke, and made fun of "Miss Muzzy," as he used to call me.

Ah, poor Dick! You know the story, children; how quickly he rose to fame when the opportunity came; fighting and falling so gallantly, with many another hero, in that cruel Crimean war, which carried off so much of the best blood that England had to shed. But we mourned as for a hero and a Christian; and pride was mixed with grief. His last act was one of self-devotion—he picked up the burning shell to save the lives of others, and perished in the noble deed.



MIMICRY.



Y DEAR YOUNG FRIENDS,

That kind good Aunt Judy must have some keensighted observant little boys and girls amongst her many nephews and nieces I am quite sure, and, therefore, I shall ask her leave to take some of them a walk with me—at least in fancy. Only a few steps down the garden, or into the meadow—we shall not need to go far—hovering in this sunny May over the sweet-scented blossoms of the wallflower, or perchance even of the homely dandelion, we find the little fly we want. Look, there it is!—quick-flighted, striped with black and yellow, poised in air above the flower. Now I need this little fly just as a clergyman has his text: he teaches you a lesson from the text; I am going to try and teach you one from the fly.

“You have often seen it before.” Yes, no doubt you have, and have perhaps called it a wasp; yet it is not; it is a two-winged fly—a syrphus. A wasp has four wings; yes, and something more, which this fly has not—a wasp has a sting. Now, in this sting lies the very reason that this little fly before us has such a wasp-like look. God makes the sting of the wasp not only to protect its own self, but also, in measure, to extend its protection to many another insect beside: there are moths, flies, and even, though less markedly, yellow-banded beetles, which imitate the wasp. This is what naturalists call mimicry, or sometimes they use an adjective, and say the insect, or creature (for mimicry is not confined to insects), is mimetic; and this imitation is sometimes used for protection, and sometimes to enable the creature to lurk unnoticed, waiting for its prey. Many spiders are, for this reason, mimetic; closely resembling the colour of the earth, or the tree trunk, or even the flower on which they hide.

Very strange and wonderful are some of the mimetic insects in tropical countries; large Mantidæ are made so closely to imitate the leaves of plants, that you would be filled with wonder to see them move; their green wing-covers are veined just as a leaf might be, and the mimicry is most complete. Almost more strange than this is the fact that gaily-coloured butterflies, themselves protected by a

pungent secretion from their bodies, which prevents birds and other insect-eating creatures from feeding on them, are closely copied by other butterflies, not otherwise related to them. There is many an insect of the genus *Danais*, or *Heliconia*, which has so exact a mimic in some other butterfly that it requires the eye of a naturalist to tell that they are distinct: for example, in North America there is a large and splendid butterfly called *Danais Archippus*; it is of a rich chestnut colour, with deep-black edgings to its wings; it being a *Danais*, is protected by its smell, and it has a species of *Limenitis* which closely mimics it, resembling it in colour very exactly: this is called *Limenitis disippus*. This is the more strange because, generally, insects of the genus *Limenitis* are black, with white markings. Quite as wonderful, however, if not quite so striking, are the mimics of our common bees and wasps; the flies which copy them are very numerous, and, strangely enough, one fly which spends its early, or larva life in bees' nests has two forms or varieties, one of which, black with a red tail, closely resembles the lapidary bee, that splendid fellow, velvet black, with an orange-red tail, that you see about the flowers in summer-time; whereas the other form is yellow-banded, with a white tail, and resembles the humble bee. This fly is common, and is called *Volucella bombylans*. Another rarer *Volucella* is yellow-banded, like a wasp, and is called *Volucella inanis*. Perhaps even more curious still are the lazy *Apathi*—bees which enter the nests of all the humble bees and live with them, sponging on their honest labour; you would be sure to think these were honest gentlemen instead of thieves, so exactly do they resemble the large bees with which they live; but one little point finds them out—they want the badge of industry; they have no tuft of hairs on their legs to gather the pollen from the flowers, they do no work, they only steal. Stranger still is it to find moths with transparent wings; true moths, and yet so nearly resembling bees and wasps that you would probably mistake them; such are the bee and hornet hawk-moths. If I was to tell of half the examples of mimicry in English insect life, I should write far too long a letter, but one more must be given, because it is one of such common occurrence that you can verify it for yourselves most easily: many caterpillars of the looping or geometer sort (so called because in walking they bend their backs like a Greek omega, and seem to measure the ground) when at rest resemble twigs of trees so closely, that few would guess that the little seeming branch


springing from the main stem could be anything else until they saw it move.

God cares for the sparrows, my dear children, and so He does not think it beneath Him to provide these means of protection even for caterpillars and flies—how much more then would He take care of you? I will, therefore, in taking leave of this subject of mimicry, ask you all to learn this lesson from it—that if a great and good God does not think these little insects beneath His care, you may safely go to Him and lay the very least of your little troubles before Him; it will not be beneath His notice. As good Mary Howitt has told you—

“Surely He who cares for them
Will much more care for us.”




BURIED WORTHIES LIVING IN FAME.

1.  **EVEN** Grecian cities fought for **HOMER** dead,
Through which the living **Homer** begged his bread.
2. **DRYDEN** in immortal strain
Had roused the table round again,
But that a ribald king and court
Bade him toil on to make them sport.
3. A thousand times this pipe did **TASSO** sound.
4. And **HEBER** sang in lyric strain sublime
The Christian triumph over death and time.
5. In sorrow or in gladness still to lift
Our hearts to Him who loveth us through all,
This **KEBLE** taught.
6. **FLETCHER** and other wits found easy fame,
Nor owned an artist's nor a poet's flame.
7. A glow-worm lamp,
It cheered mild **SPENSER**, driven from Faëry land.
To struggle through dark ways.
8. A hare, who, in a civil way,
Complied with everything like **GAY**.
9. **Martin TUPPER** sat on a wall,
Martin Tupper had a great fall;
All his best efforts with pencil and pen
Couldn't set **Martin Tupper** up again.
10. **SCHILLER**! tremendous in sublimity.
11. The courtly **WALLER** next commands thy lays.
Muse! tune thy verse with art to **Waller's** praise.
12. And **Milton**, **Dryden**, **Pope**, alike forget,
Resign their hallowed bays to **Walter SCOTT**.

EDGYTH.



AUNT JUDY'S CORRESPONDENCE.

 ENNY WREN" inquires "why birds are so seldom seen at seaports, even where there are trees?" Aunt

Judy did not know that this was a fact, and can scarcely imagine, even now, that the woods at Bournemouth, Mount Edgecumbe, &c., are devoid of songsters.

"F. H. Seagrave" kindly asks if any of our young readers would like a chrysalis of the beautiful Privet Moth? She adds: "by the time an answer appears, we shall have one ready, as the caterpillar buried himself about a week ago. We always find *two* every year in our garden, *never more*, and amuse ourselves by feeding and keeping them till they become moths, when we *let them go*, not having the heart to kill them."

Aunt Judy is sorry to be unable to tell "F. H. S." the name of the fungus that so closely resembles *Padina pavonia*. She remembers it well, but her scientific knowledge of fungi is limited to the edible species.

"Beatrice." (1) Aunt Judy does not think that there is a *sequel* to the "Wide Wide World," but Miss Wetherall has published several other books, which you can obtain from any bookseller. (2) The girl's music mistress can alone decide what is necessary. (3) It is very nice, and abundantly illustrated, chiefly suited for young children. (4) The same motto as is borne by his father, *Ne obliviscaris*. (5) The letters form a Greek word signifying *for ever*, and are used as an emblem of constancy.

"S. B. C." Your plan sounds ingenious, but would not succeed, as the sea-weeds would die in stagnant water, especially if it was not salt. It is difficult to persuade them to grow even in an

aquarium where the sea water is constantly changed to keep it good; they require greater depth than can be provided by artificial means.

The name of the book by Miss Bowman about which "Kitty" inquires is "The Boy Foresters" (Routledge).

"Tiddy" inquires what is the best method for washing Shetland shawls?

"M." There are books published on the "Language of Flowers," but we never heard of a *language of fans*.

"Aunt Prue." Playing-cards are said to have been invented in China in the reign of Leun-ho (1120), and were common in 1131. As early as 1463 there were card-makers in this country, the importation of playing-cards having been prohibited by Act of Parliament in that year, as injurious to the interests of native manufacturers. Edward Darcy obtained a patent for the manufacture of them at the end of the reign of Queen Elizabeth, who, as well as her sister Mary, was fond of card-playing. The importation of them was prohibited after the 20th July, 1615, during the reign of James I., "as the art of making them was then brought to perfection in this country." There is an interesting book on the subject by the late Rev. E. S. Taylor, "The History of Playing Cards" (Hotten & Co.), in which you will find all further particulars as to the suits, &c. The origin of Bézique has been discussed in "Notes and Queries" (4th Series, vol. iii.), where one correspondent states that it was invented by a poor German schoolmaster called Gustave Flaker, who called it "Flakernuhle," the name Bézique being afterwards given to it in France. Another suggests that the title

is derived from an old Italian game at cards called "Bazzica."

In reply to "Berengaria's" inquiry as to whether Harold II. was "included among the nine kings who died violent deaths since 1066," we have received the following reply from "Edith:" "I think that there were *ten* kings who died violent deaths since 1066 (amongst whom Harold II. could not be said to be included, as he died in 1066), viz.: William I., bruised against the pommel of his saddle, 1087; William II., shot by an arrow, 1100; Richard I., shot by an arrow, 1199; Edward II., murdered, 1327; Richard II., murdered or starved, 1400; Henry VI., murdered, 1471; Edward V., smothered, 1483; Richard III., killed, 1485; Charles I., beheaded, 1649; William III., thrown from his horse, 1702."

"Edith." Little "Toby" has left the Convalescent Hospital at Highgate; she returned to her home, near Sevenoaks, two months ago. The Great Ormond Street Hospital is open to visitors every day (except Sunday), between the hours of two and four o'clock.

Report of the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Cot," at the Hospital for Sick Children, 49, Great Ormond Street, London, September 14th, 1872.

Little Janie D— was reported last month as going on so favourably that it was probable she would be well enough to be sent away for change of air. She has now left "Aunt Judy's Cot," and is enjoying the sweet breezes at Highgate, where it is hoped that her recovery will be completed; the little foot having already made more progress than the most sanguine of her many friends could have at one time expected. It is now hoped that she will have perfect use of her foot. "She is the best-tempered little patient I ever had," was the Nurse's remark, when the time for

Janie's departure arrived: she was not only sweet-tempered, but very patient and loving. "I am glad, and I am sorry," were her words at parting—"glad," to go to see the green trees and flowers at the Convalescent Home,—but "sorry" to part from those who have so kindly cared for her, during her stay at the Hospital.

The new patient in the first Cot is named Annie L—; she is nine years old; her complaint is a very sad one, and occasions a great deal of suffering; but she is very patient, and seldom complains: indeed, if there happens to be, as alas! is too often the case, one more ache than usual, she always tells you of it with a smile on her face. Unlike many of the poor children who are in the wards, Annie has been well taught, and is fond of reading and needle-work, as her movable bed-table testifies, for it is covered with canvas and wools—two or three pieces of work being in progress at the same time. A friend brought her some little mats to work in the ground; the centre of one was occupied by the Prince of Wales' feathers: Annie's face brightened, and she was observed to begin upon this at once. "How busy you are, Annie," said a lady to her. "Why working so fast?" "I want to finish this quick, and send it to the Prince of Wales," was the reply. Annie had heard all about the Prince and Princess visiting the ward that she is now in, and her loving little heart desired to make some return for the condescension of their Royal Highnesses.

Little Herbert P—, the occupant of the second "Aunt Judy's Cot" (referred to last month), is a little better than he was when that report was written; some of "Aunt Judy's" readers have generously sent him a few little gifts, and he desires to return his thanks for them. Herbert's companion (Willie C—, in the "Quiver Cot") received some letters from unknown friends, and told him all about the contents. "I wish some of Aunt

Judy's little children would write me a letter," said Herbert; "that would be fine." Probably, before the next report, the hint may be taken and his wish gratified.

Contributions to the "Aunt Judy's Magazine Col," received to September 14th, 1872.

	£	s.	d.
Maude and Mildred, for June, July, August, and September	0	8	0
G. A. F. (monthly)	0	2	10
M. A. F. (two months)	0	1	0
Bertie, Georgie, and Maggie (monthly)	0	1	3
Beaver (monthly)	0	2	6
Francis Haydon Green (two months)	0	2	0
Mamma, Margie, and Helen (monthly)	0	1	0
Collected by Helen, Hales- worth (quarterly)	0	16	6
Spencer, Kensington Park, East Cliff, Bournemouth	0	2	0
Alice and Edith Turner, 1 Clif- ton Villas, Broom Hall Park Villas, Sheffield, for Janie	0	5	0
"Miss Muffet" (collected)	1	0	0
Herbert, Lucy, and Aunt Kate	1	0	0
Carry Shore, 3s., Janet Shore, 2s.	0	5	0
Zind Van, Southampton	0	10	0
G. M. Gwynn, Great Marlow	0	1	0
Lolo	0	3	6
Evelyn and George, 4s. 6d., Agnes, 4s. 6d.	0	9	0

	£	s.	d.
Mary, Toms, and Roly	0	1	6
Proceeds of the sale of waste letter paper, collected by Alice, Mary, and Blanche, and small donations	0	10	6
Agnes, Bertie, Fred, and Chickie	0	1	0
Gina	0	1	0
Bertha Billikin, Bingham Birches, Belton	0	0	3
Nobbs and Toby	0	0	2
Five Orange Blossoms	0	2	6
Padra, Madre, Beville, Peggy, and Bee, Sunbury on Thames	0	12	0
"Farthings collected by A. E.," 1s. 9d., and 3d. from the Cook, Riga Villa	0	2	0
"In loving remembrance of my darling 'Mets,' who died 27th September, 1870, aged 11 years," from F. V. E. V.	0	10	0
From a little Boy who has done wrong, and is very sorry	0	10	0
Bar, Sambo, Ape, and Johnson	0	3	0
"M."	0	2	6
Two scent packets, from a nurse.			
Peggy and Bee, four pretty dressed dolls; and Bee, a small basket.			
Anonymous, a packet of chil- dren's books.			
"Reed Wren's Nest," and A. E. A., a case containing an interesting collection of birds' eggs.			



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